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SEARCHLIGHT

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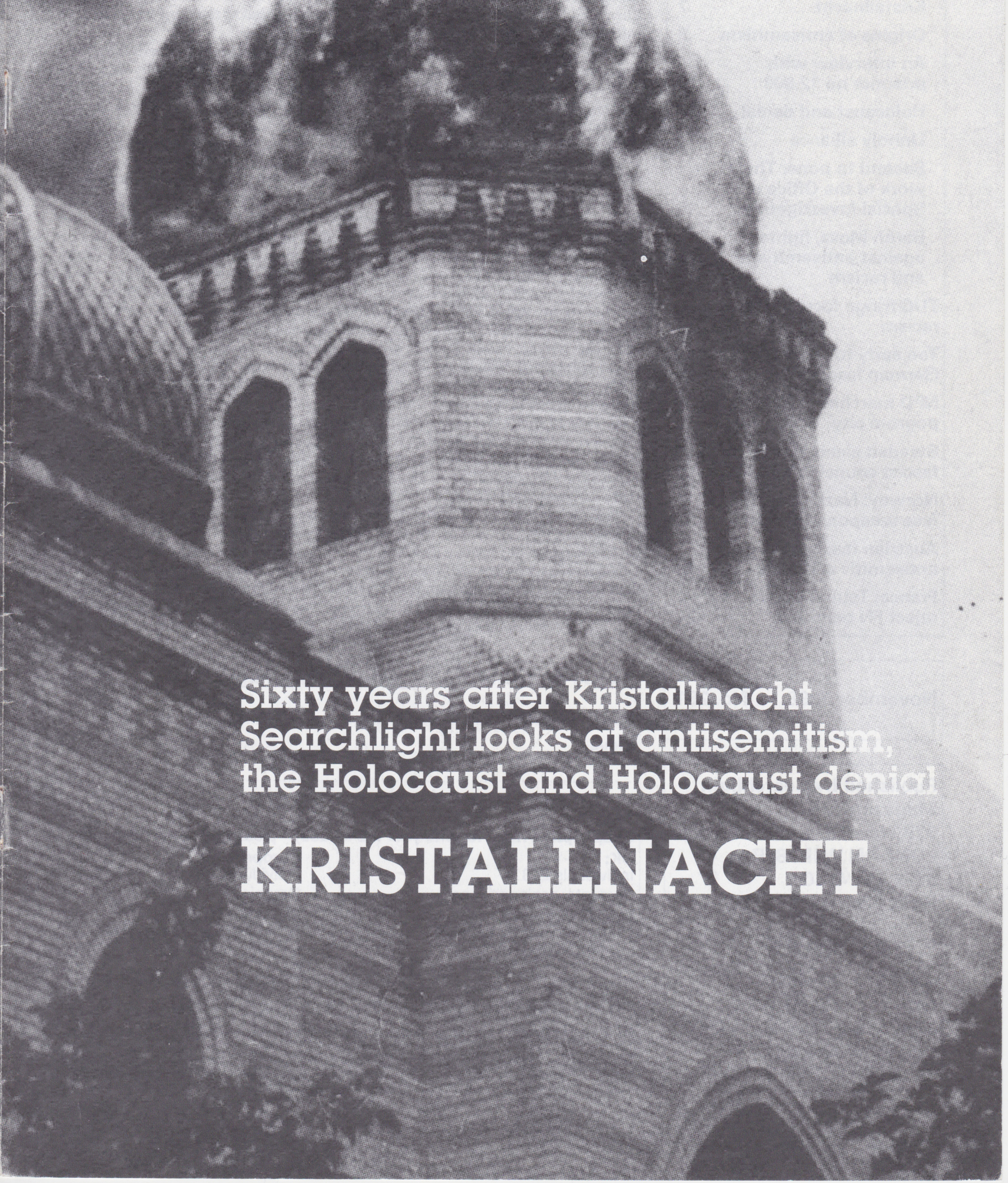

Sixty years after Kristallnacht
Searchlight looks at antisemitism,
the Holocaust and Holocaust denial

KRISTALLNACHT

Contents

BNP joins nazi music scene 3
Going for broke: the BNP at the European elections 4
News from the sewers 6

Antisemitism, the Holocaust and Holocaust denial

Kristallnacht 7
Origins of antisemitism 8
An interview with prisoner no 12,909 10
Holocaust and denial 12
Unholy alliance 14
Second to none: The work of the Office of Special Investigations 15
Baron Moss, fighter against antisemitism and racism 16
TUC fringe focuses on racism 17
Too early to write off German fascists 18
NPD marches through pogrom city 19
Sweden elects more fascist councillors 20
Norway: Nazi arsonists face weapons charges 21
Austrian fascists keep antisemitic cult alive 22
France: Toulon voters reject FN nepotism 23

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Tel: 0171 284 4040
Fax: 0171 284 4410
Email: editor@s-light.demon.co.uk
World Wide Web site:
http://www.s-light.demon.co.uk

Editorial

Still seeking justice

This month we commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of Kristallnacht with a series of articles on antisemitism, the Holocaust and Holocaust denial. On Kristallnacht the Nazi party organised a pogrom throughout Germany that ended with the murder of nearly 100 Jews and the detention of 2,000 in concentration camps. By the time the Allied powers liberated Nazi-occupied Europe in 1945, six million Jews had been exterminated in the most barbaric and calculated act of genocide that history has witnessed.

While some key Nazis were prosecuted in war crimes trials shortly after the war, and a small number in the intervening decades, justice can hardly be said to have been done. More than 50 years later compensation claims for property and money and valuables lodged in bank accounts belonging to victims of the Holocaust remain to be fully paid.

The Cold War meant that the end justified the means and Nazi scientists who worked on the V2 Rocket and other projects, using concentration camp slave labour, were snapped up by the United States and the Soviet Union to help them win the arms race. Fear of the left was so great during the Cold War period, during which the phrase "better dead than red" came to be coined, that when the socialist Salvador Allende was elected president of Chile in 1970, the CIA backed a military coup led by General Augusto Pinochet against the democratically elected government. At least 3,000 people died or vanished because they supported the left-wing government and tens of thousands fled to live in exile. Democrats the world over supported Chilean refugees in the countries in which they settled, appalled at the evidence of torture and executions. Not satisfied with inflicting horror within Chile's borders Pinochet's deaths squads roamed the world killing and maiming even the most conservative of his opponents.

The arrest of Pinochet in London last month on an extradition warrant from Spain in connection with the murder of Spanish citizens while he was in power from 1973 to 1990 is something that can only be welcomed. In spite of democratic advances in Chile, the country is still governed by a constitution constructed during the rule of the military dictatorship and Pinochet is a member of the Senate for life, regardless of elections. Let us also not forget that at least one British citizen was tortured by his regime.

Claims that Pinochet has diplomatic immunity have been dismissed by British government officials and as we go to press the Spanish government is preparing its case against the former dictator, while a separate action may be brought by Chilean exiles who are still resident in this country. These exiles have mounted a vigil outside the expensive private hospital where Pinochet is recovering from a minor back operation, calling for his extradition to Spain. For the sake of justice and the remembrance of the Junta's victims he deserves to face trial.

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BNP joins nazi music scene

A new alliance is forming within the nazi music scene, as reported in last month's *Searchlight*. Bonded by a mutual hatred of Combat 18, this new group brings together the British Movement, the British Hammerskins, the British National Party and some previously unaligned white power musicians. With so many separate agendas it is questionable whether this new alliance can survive, but for the time being it has certainly become the largest group on the British white power music scene.

This new coalition has been forming for the best part of a year, but it was the split between some of the leaders of Blood and Honour and Combat 18 in August that crystallised the bond between the new allies. They now have the potential to dominate the nazi music scene.

The realignment has given birth to a new publication. *The Independent Voice* brings together those people previously involved in the magazines *Highlander*, *Rampage* and the British Hammerskins' *Saxon*. The four contact addresses for the new magazine belong to Steve Cartwright (Glasgow BNP), Steve Jones (English Rose), Billy Bartlett (Cardiff) and the British Hammerskins.

However, if the first issue is anything to go by, they need not have bothered. Despite a heavy glossy cover, the magazine is hardly anything to shout about. Devoid of any politics, it is the usual compilation of band interviews and reviews. The lack of real politics is an obvious consequence of such a broad-based coalition.

One of the interviews is with Brad Hollinby, the guitarist from the south London band Squadron. In the midst of a thinly veiled attack on C18, he claims that bands make no money from the music scene. Obviously somebody forgot to tell Bartlett. Hot on the heels of his recent tours to Australia and Germany, he is back in the studio recording yet another Celtic Warrior CD, quite separately from the Broadsword CD he is also about to release. With a share in the *Voice of Britain* compilation CD and his own merchandising operation, Bartlett is doing very well thank you. When police raided his house last year they found CD orders worth thousands of pounds.

An interesting element to this new alliance is the involvement of the BNP. The party has had little influence within the white power scene since the early 1990s, when Blood and Honour was controlled by Neil Parish. After his demise and an attempt by the BNP leadership to distance itself from skinheads, the relationship cooled. With the departure of C18, the BNP is once again hoping to recruit from the followers of nazi music and, more importantly, purloin a share of the money.

A number of British nazi bands have recorded material for a BNP fund-raising CD. This is on top of the 100 copies of the *Rights for Whites* CD that the Swedish organisation, Nordland, donated to the party. Advertisements for CDs now appear regularly in BNP publications.

So it was no real surprise to find a number of leading BNP members at an Ian Stuart Donaldson memorial concert at the Victoria Social Club in Mansfield on 26 September. Even family man Tony Lecomber, a leading BNP activist, put in an appearance, much to the amazement of others in the audience. However he did not seem too enamoured with much of the music.

Over 200 people attended the concert, which was organised by the local British Movement group. There was almost universal contentment over the removal of C18 from the scene, with the general view being that it should have happened some time ago.

One man who was not too impressed was Andy Frain, a leading member of the Chelsea Headhunters and general lunatic. Upset at the anti-C18 atmosphere at the gig, he proceeded to take out his frustration on Steve Jones, lead singer of English Rose. It took several people to pull Frain off Jones's face.

When will they ever learn? The last event Frain attended was in south London in November 1997, where he proceeded to headbutt every skinhead he could find.

Whether the British Movement will begin to resent the growing influence of the BNP remains to be seen. For the moment at least, the two have established a working relationship. As *Searchlight* goes to press it seems another fundraising gig is being held for the BNP.

THE INDEPENDENT VOICE

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THIS ISSUE FEATURES

SQUADRON
EXCALIBUR
STONEHAMMER
HATE CRIME
&
REVIEWS
NEWS
CONTACTS
AND MORE

IN MEMORY OF
STINKO
REST IN PEACE
BROTHER.

The new nazi music magazine 'The Independent Voice'. We hope its producers will improve the quality of the illustrations in the next issue. How else can we identify all the characters who turn up at nazi gigs?

Police hit NS88

Swedish police have finally acted against Marcel Schilf, a close political ally of C18's leader Will Browning and the man behind NS88, a hardline CD and video merchandising operation. Schilf, a German by birth, was arrested on 9 October along with Erik Blücher, one of the most important nazi operators in Scandinavia.

The two men are under suspicion for copying old German propaganda films and videos of nazi gigs. They are also suspected of large-scale selling of banned CDs in Sweden and abroad.

The police seized 60 video master tapes, between 15 and 20 video titles and about 20 CD titles. They also confiscated a number of offensive nazi magazines and CD-ROMs containing material believed to be offensive and racist, and an extensive mailing list. In addition, the police intercepted 50 packages on their way to recipients in Germany, the Czech Republic, Finland, Italy and the USA.

Since 1995 Schilf has developed a strong working relationship with C18. In 1997 he took over the running of C18's CD operation, ISD Records. He is a hardline nazi who has a long history of bomb-making and computer hacking. Though German by birth, Schilf obtained Danish nationality, although he eventually set up his nazi operations in Sweden.

Going for broke?

Last month *Searchlight* revealed that John Tyndall had reversed his earlier decision to stand down as leader of the British National Party because of his growing doubts over his appointed successor, Nick Griffin. This month *Searchlight* looks at the simmering diversions within the BNP leadership over the party's strategy for the European elections.

The rearguard action by those opposed to Nick Griffin's succession to the leadership of the British National Party has now spilled over into a bitter dispute over the organisation's tactics for next year's European elections. As reported last month, Griffin has been leading the charge for "Middle England", switching attention away from the urban conurbations of London and West Yorkshire in preference for the more affluent regions of the Home Counties and the South West. He has also been spearheading the BNP's rural campaign, with production of the *British Countryman* broadsheet and the establishment of an environmental circle (see last month's *Searchlight*).

As part of this strategy Griffin is keen that the BNP focuses its European election campaign on these new areas of activity. He is especially keen on standing in the South West of England, where the BNP has been increasing its activities over the past two years under the close direction of its regional organiser, Bruce Cowd. In Taunton members have been involved in the anti-paedophile campaign against Sidney Cooke; in Weston-Super-Mare members have been campaigning against the single currency; and in Newlyn, Cornwall, the party has been organising around the fishing community.

Griffin sees the South West as the type of region that the BNP needs to contest if it is ever to break out of its present political wilderness. Competing in the South West, with its large farming and rural community and strong vein of support for the anti-European United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), will allow the BNP to focus on issues other than race and immigration.

Griffin is also working to a personal agenda. By directing the campaign away from London and Yorkshire, he hopes to dilute the support of those opposed to his leadership bid while simultaneously building up his own power base within the party. This is particularly the case in the West Midlands, where he has developed a close working relationship with the former National Democrats members who defected to the BNP earlier this year, and in South Wales, where Griffin has been spending an increasing amount of time.

While some in the BNP leadership, including Tyndall, are keen to emphasise the budgetary constraints on the organisation's electoral possibilities, Griffin takes a vastly different view. In his belief that the European elections could herald the BNP's political breakthrough, Griffin is demanding that the party should "go for broke". He is privately arguing that the BNP should stand in as many regions as possible, even if that means dipping deeply into its financial reserves. For Griffin this is a small investment for such a large potential return.

The UK will be divided into 12 regions for the European elections and the cost of standing a slate in a single region will be phenomenal. With a deposit set at £5,000 and the cost of producing the necessary leaflets around £15,000, the BNP would have to spend at least £20,000 for each region. As a party will have to stand in at least three regions to qualify for a party political broadcast, the minimum cost for the BNP to mount any sort of campaign will be around £60,000. And this does not include the not insignificant cost of actually producing the broadcast.

While Griffin seems to be in favour of standing in eight regions (at an estimated campaign cost of £160,000), others appear even more ambitious. Colin Smith, the BNP's Kent organiser, believes that the party should challenge every region.

Despite the October issue of the BNP's monthly magazine *Spearhead* devoting four pages to enable Griffin to outline his plans for the European election campaign, his position of "going for broke" is not dominant within the organisation. Whether because of suspicion over Griffin's precise intentions or a belief that Middle England is not yet prepared to take up the BNP message, others are less convinced. While Griffin is keen to "go for broke", the majority of the BNP leadership seem to prefer a more limited campaign focused on the party's traditional inner-city heartlands and working class support.

Tyndall has been among the most scathing critics of Griffin's election strategy. Also writing in the October issue of *Spearhead*, Tyndall attacks the so-called "modernisers" within the BNP. In an open swipe at some of Griffin's supporters, most notably Mark Deavin, who recently wrote in *Spearhead* how the BNP needed to create "a new, more

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John Tyndall, the BNP leader, is in an awkward position. While distancing himself from the allegedly very naughty Colin Jordan, his former führer, in October's Spearhead, he cannot quite abandon his acquiescence to the old nazi. Here he sits with the late American Nazi Party boss George Lincoln Rockwell (left) and Jordan (centre) in the days when he acted as note taker, tea boy and chief bottle washer to the movement

positive image for itself", Tyndall writes: "I tend towards headshaking when I hear certain people speaking of the BNP 'at last cleaning up its act' as if before recent propaganda refinements we had been a crowd of mutton-heads 'thinking with their boots' with no mind to anything else but annoying the militant left. The same headshaking is prompted when the efforts of past movements are denigrated as if we had yet reached the point of eclipsing their achievements and were in a position to look down on them."

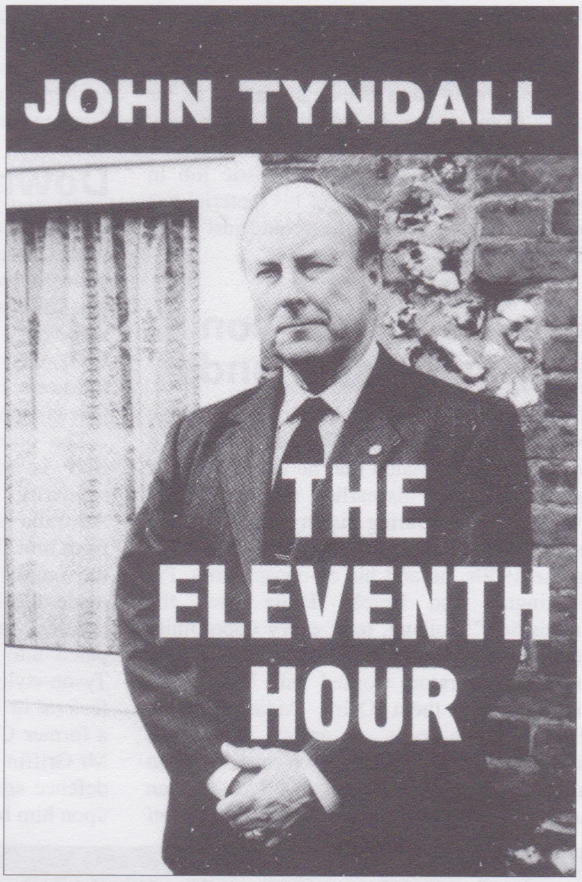
Tyndall has privately gone even further, telling close colleagues that he is sick of those with an apparent "love affair" with the European elections, a thinly veiled attack on Griffin himself.

He believes that the BNP would be reckless to spend too much of its money on the campaign and questions Griffin's optimism over the BNP's likely success in the election.

Less charitable members of the BNP have commented that Tyndall's concern might be more for himself than for the organisation. It seems that Tyndall is happily receiving the interest from a six-figure sum that was left to the BNP a couple of years ago. He is also believed to be the sole trustee of this money, leading some BNP members to suggest that it has become the leader's private nest egg.

Whatever concerns some might have about squandering money, the BNP will certainly be standing in at least three regions. London has been unanimously agreed as the number one target, with Griffin even believing that there is an outside possibility of the BNP winning a seat. He believes not only that proportional representation will help the party, but also that mid-term anti-government feelings and an increasingly divided and ineffective Conservative Party could allow the BNP its best chance of an electoral breakthrough.

The second area the BNP seems certain to contest is the West Midlands. During the 1970s the National Front gained considerable support there and more recently the entire West Midlands organisation of the National Democrats, successor to the NF, has defected to the BNP. However, the decision to stand in the West Midlands owes more to the BNP's desire to smash the present-day National Front, led by John McAuley, for which the region is the last bastion.



The new edition of Tyndall's book. "I'm not really a nazi. I just like posing like Hitler." But with so many enemies inside the party perhaps he is just guarding his vital parts

All the talk of "nationalist unity" over the past 12 months has clearly turned out to be a sham. As *Searchlight* predicted last January, the BNP's sole intention has always been to neutralise the NF to leave the BNP a clear run. Despite continued whispers from some quarters of an electoral pact with the NF and even the anti-European UKIP, the BNP has no real intention of doing deals with anyone.

Conversely, while the NF remains opposed to a merger with the BNP, the BNP's recent gains in the West Midlands may persuade the NF into seeking a deal with the BNP whereby the NF contests the West Midlands but agrees to keep out of London. Although the BNP is now likely to reject such a move, contrary to its position 12 months ago, the NF would at least be able to claim credit within the far right for its pro-unity stance.

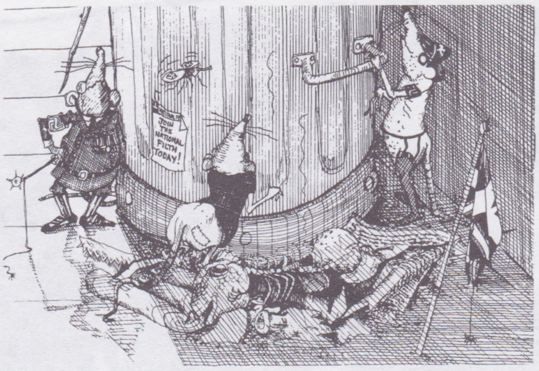
The third region that the BNP will contested is likely to be either the North West or Yorkshire and Humber. While Tyndall has publicly expressed his preference for Yorkshire, with its long right-wing history and potentially fruitful areas such as Dewsbury, Bradford and Halifax, the current state of party organisation in the region has forced him to think again. The BNP's North West region has capitalised on the disarray in rival Yorkshire BNP and seized the opportunity to press its case.

It seems that the North West might have won the day, as Tyndall is now believed to have changed his initial view. The North West covers Manchester, Liverpool, Lancashire, The Wirral and Cheshire. It has a total voting population of 5,277,194 and a mixture of traditional working-class urban heartlands and rural farming communities in the north of the region. In recent months the BNP has been actively distributing *British Countryman* to Cumbrian farmers.

If a fourth seat is to be contested, Yorkshire is likely to lose out again, this time to the South West, although for the time being Griffin has failed to convince others in the leadership of the region's merits. This may change nearer the time, especially if Cowd is successful in his bid to raise money for the campaign. To this end, he is currently in the process of producing a CD as a fundraiser.

The differences over strategy for the European elections reflects a growing split within the BNP hierarchy over future directions and priorities. The group supporting Griffin seems to be keen for the BNP to make a fundamental break, at least publicly, with the past, by targeting new constituencies and issues other than race and immigration. The bulk of the leadership not only feel unconvinced that these new audiences will respond favourably to the BNP message, but seem determined to block Griffin from gaining more control over the organisation. Despite his best efforts, and very public statements in *Spearhead* and to journalists, Griffin seems to have lost the argument, for the time being at least.

news from the sewers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Unobserving the nazis

"The jackboots and bovver boots stomped through the Baltic city of Lübeck before the election … and yet there has been no electoral echo to the sound of those 10,000 marchers."

With these words, Martin Walker leapt into print in *The Observer* on 4 October to show the world how out of touch he is. And we do not mean his use of dead expressions like "bovver boots".

There was no march of 10,000 nazis in Lübeck before the German elections on 27 September, despite Walker's claim that "television cameras filmed the marching skinheads of Lübeck". The event that Walker is trying to write about was in the Baltic city of Rostock on 19 September and brought a maximum of 3,000 nazis onto the streets.

Walker's article also made another serious error in stating that the European Parliament was voting to lift Jean-Marie Le Pen's parliamentary immunity "on a charge of assaulting a woman candidate during the French elections". Although Le Pen's civil rights in France have been suspended for two years over this assault, the purpose of the European Parliament vote was to allow him to be charged in Germany over his statements minimising the Holocaust.

Walker's book on the National Front, published in the mid-seventies, was a bestseller, but, as Searchlight discovered on reading it, was full of factual errors. Much of his analysis had been cobbled together from views put into his head by the likes of the infamous NF National Activities Organiser, Martin Webster, and the dissident Tory Roy Painter.

Walker also had a reputation for staging house parties that brought together people of extremely different political views and various races, and were widely regarded as somewhat sick.

When Walker begged *Searchlight*'s late editor, Maurice Ludmer, to give his book a good review, after buying Maurice a very expensive meal, Maurice pointed out that he had lost all respect for Walker after hearing about the views he held while at college and that he much regretted giving Walker his first big news stories when he started writing his diary column at *The Guardian*. Walker had repaid this kindness by telling students in Scotland that *Searchlight*'s present editor, Gerry Gable, was an expert "plumber", not the sort that mends leaking pipes but the type that carried out the Watergate break-in. But that's typical of Walker, always showing off about things he knows nothing about.

His byline on the *Observer* story indicated he was writing from Brussels – about as far away from reality as possible. It's a pity really, because when Walker has knuckled down to doing a proper journalistic job in Russia and America some of his material has been first class. Perhaps he should just leave the far right alone.

How to try and con a jury and lose friends

The gregarious would-be leader of the British National Party, Nick Griffin, has been trying to give the impression that he is not racist or antisemitic since his earliest days in the old National Front. During his days as one of the bosses of the Political Soldier wing of the NF in the 1980s, he and his co-conspirators, Pat Harrington and Derek "Bring back the Inquisition" Holland, took every opportunity to show their liking for black people. A few black collaborators worked with him at that time, among them Osiris Akkebala from Florida, who runs a group which we described as comprising two men and an alligator. The organisation, the Pan African International Movement, promotes itself under the acronym PAIN. After sharing platforms with the Ku Klux Klan in the US, the group became known to much of the black community as "pain in the butt".

Now as in the past, not all his fellow nazis are so keen on Griffin's connections with the men in the flowery shirts from the Deep South. Akkebala senior and junior were jetted in to show the jury at Griffin's trial for peddling race hate material earlier this year that he was really a nice guy. Mr Nice could have saved the movement's money as the jury found him guilty all the same.

From what we hear, spending party money on flights and hotel accommodation for black men is not being easily forgotten or forgiven by the rank and file of the BNP, who believe black people were only put on earth to be slaves, colonised or victims of lynch mobs.

We wonder how the collaborating Mr Akkebala reconciled his treachery with what *British Nationalist*, the BNP paper, was saying about the murdered black teenager Stephen Lawrence.

Down under and out

It looks like the Australian authorities do not want Griffin around either. After hearing that he was unwelcome there, he came up with the wheeze of sending Mrs G in his place to utter his words of wisdom to audiences drawn from the more than a little unsuccessful followers of Pauline Hanson and her racist One Nation party.

The question on everybody's lips in the BNP is whether she is going as a act of solidarity with her husband or because Australia is about as far away as she can get from him. The ruffles in the domestic bliss of the family Griffin, noted by the team who made the *Cook Report* programme on the political ambitions of the country squire, paled into insignificance compared to their Tyson-style sort-out at the Front National festival in Paris at the end of September. For a former Cambridge University boxing Blue, Mr Griffin put up a rather lacklustre pugilistic defence against the blows being rained down upon him by his better half.

Interchangeable separatists: Griffin and the Akkebalas outside Harrow Crown Court, where Griffin failed to convince the jury of his innocence

Sixty years after Kristallnacht Searchlight looks at antisemitism, the Holocaust and Holocaust denial

KRISTALLNACHT

SIXTY YEARS ago – on the night of 9 November through until the morning of 10 November 1938 – the Jews of Germany witnessed a preview of the catastrophe that would soon befall them and the rest of European Jewry. A nationwide pogrom, secretly organised by a section of the Nazi party, left many Jews dead in the streets, and hundreds of Jewish businesses and synagogues destroyed, and debris that included among other things, broken glass, giving the pogrom the name Kristallnacht.

The official Nazi explanation of this unprecedented outburst of violent antisemitism was the assassination of the German diplomat Ernst von Rath by Herschel Grynszpan at the German embassy in Paris on 6 November. Herschel's family had been forcibly expelled from Germany, stripped of all money and possessions and beaten and dumped on the Polish borders without money, food or accommodation. On hearing of his family's plight Herschel went to the embassy and shot dead von Rath, the first German official to receive him.

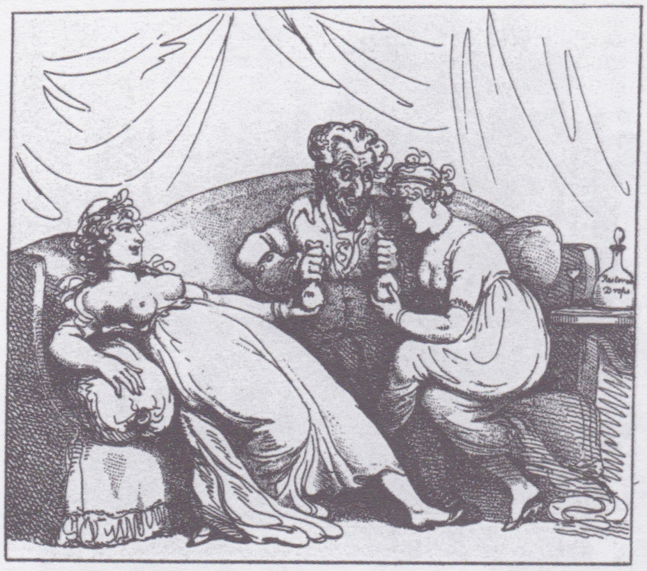
Hitler immediately denounced the deed as part of a Jewish-inspired world conspiracy directed against Germany. He proclaimed "the SA [Brownshirts] should have a fling".

Goebbels then made a speech urging "spontaneous" demonstrations against the Jews. Via phone and teleprinter the spontaneous pogrom was organised.

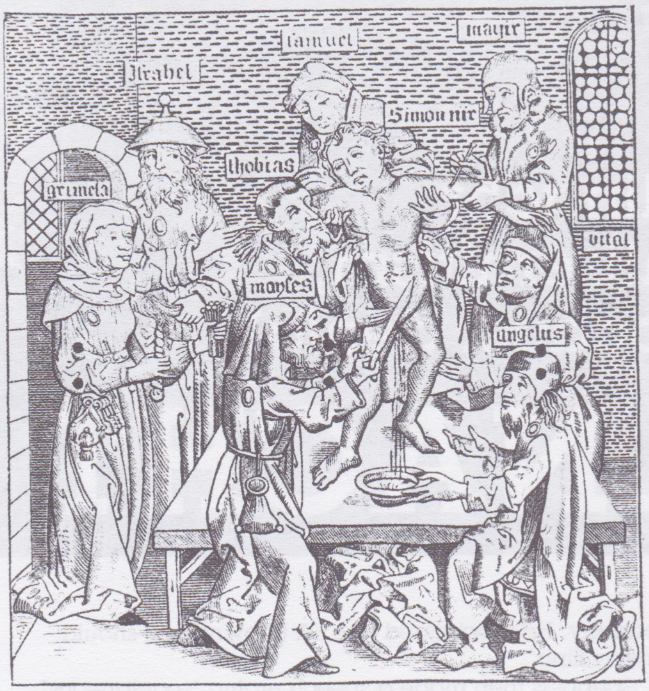
By 10 November, 191 synagogues had been burned to the ground; 76 more completely demolished; 7,000 Jewish businesses destroyed; nearly 100 Jews killed and 2,000 more rounded up and taken to concentration camps. Jews were evicted from orphanages, hospitals and old people's homes.

German Jewry was fined by the Nazis for the damage that had been inflicted on their own property. One billion Reichmarks was levied by compulsory confiscation of 20% of the property of every German Jew by a decree of 12 November 1938.

The Jews had already been declared second class citizens by the Nuremberg Laws three years earlier, which barred them from professions and ensured their passports were stamped with a "J". However, Kristallnacht marked a new phase in the persecution of German – and ultimately European – Jewry, which was to lead to their systematic slaughter.



origins of antisemitism



Trudy Gold
and Tanya Gold

IN 1945, as the Nazi empire collapsed, the Allied powers liberated thousands of concentration and labour camps throughout occupied Europe. Among these camps were six which had been dedicated to the extermination of an entire people, the Jews.

Historians now agree that the Nazis were fighting two wars, one against the Allies, and the other a race war. During a four year period, using the infrastructure of a modern nation state, with modern technology and a willing bureaucracy as tools, the Nazis systematically embarked on a plan to murder all the Jews of Europe, men, women and children. This crime has become known as the Holocaust.

The Nazi leadership were obsessed with the notion of the Jews being a potent group capable of adulterating and destroying pure "Aryan" culture. However, millions of ordinary people were swept along with the nightmare which led to the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question".

The Nazis did not invent antisemitism; they merely refined and harnessed what is essentially an ancient phenomenon and took it to its most extreme and murderous conclusion. So where did these pernicious ideas originate?

The term antisemitism was first coined by the German racist journalist Wilhelm Marr in 1879. However, the concept of Jew hatred predates the term by thousands of years.

The story of the Jewish people is first told in the Bible. Their belief in an all powerful invisible god who demands strict codes of behaviour set them apart from the other peoples of the ancient world. By Jewish law they were forbidden to marry gentiles, or even to eat with them. We find examples of dislike and hatred of the Jews as a group in Greek and Roman society. However, it was with the development of Christianity that serious problems first occurred.

Jesus of Nazareth, whose story is told in the New Testament, was a practising Jew within the Jewish tradition. After his death he was hailed as Messiah – son of God – by his followers. The teachings of these disciples, particularly those of St Paul, led to the development of a new religion, Christianity. The followers of Jesus no longer had to follow the Jewish laws, belief in the Messiah was enough.

The majority of Jews did not accept the new religion and continued to worship according to traditional Jewish belief and custom. Christians believed that their new faith fulfilled and superseded Judaism, which was now redundant. Jesus was gradually divorced from his Jewish origins and the Jews collectively were regarded as responsible for his death in spite of the fact that he was killed by the Romans. "Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in him 'you are of your father the Devil and your will is to do your father's desires'." (John 8)

It was not until 1965 that the Catholic Church finally "forgave" the Jews for the crime of deicide (the killing of God).

This rivalry between religions was politicised in 325CE at the Council of Nicea, when Christianity became the official religion and unifying force of the Roman world.

An ambiguity towards the Jews existed in Church teaching. They were gradually excluded from society as "a people apart", barred from owning land, holding public office and entering most professions, but they were allowed to live, albeit degraded lives, as witness to the true faith of Christianity. In fact any Jew who converted was regarded as a prized soul for Christianity. Thus, at this stage the animosity was religious and not racial. In the fourth century St Gregory of Nyssa, an eastern Church father, referred to the Jews as "Slayers of the Lord, murderers of the prophets, adversaries of God". Many more such inflammatory accusations are recorded.

The Jews had first been exiled from their homeland by the Romans in 70CE when their temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. The majority fled between 132 and 135CE, after another revolt against Roman authority.

Forced to flee throughout Europe and the Middle East, the Jews maintained their distinct religious culture and customs. They comprised only a small percentage of the population, and the majority lived in cities. Jewish religious practices demanded that all Jews be literate. After the fall of the Roman Empire in Western Europe in the fifth century, much of the learning of the old Roman and Greek world was lost. Illiteracy was widespread and society tightly stratified.

The Jews, a religiously accursed people, became useful to state rulers. In the tenth century the church took a law from Leviticus, the third book of the Hebrew Bible, forbidding the lending of money at interest. Excluded by Christian law from so many other trades and professions and forbidden to own land, the Jews became major traders and money lenders in the Europe of the Middle Ages. Thus the Jews came to be regarded not only as the murderers of Christ but also as economic parasites who drained the resources of ordinary people. Economic envy was added to religious mistrust. This led to extraordinary allegations such as "the blood libel", which accused Jews of using the blood of Christian babies for their Passover bread.

The first recorded blood libel was in Norwich in 1144. At Easter time, when the story of the Passion of Christ is commemorated (and which coincides with Passover) the mob, inspired by religious fervour, attacked the Jewish area of Norwich, killing people and burning the wooden houses and the records of the debts. The notion of the blood libel became so rooted in Christian culture that practically every country in Europe issued these accusations at some time, right up into the twentieth century.

Violent antisemitic attacks occurred periodically throughout the medieval period. In 1095 Pope Urban VII called for the liberation of Jerusalem from the Moslems. Islam was the third great monotheistic religion founded by the prophet Mohammed in Arabia in the seventh century. By the end of the century Islam had created a huge land empire throughout the Middle East. Whipped up by religious fervour, Crusaders massacred entire Jewish communities en route to reclaim Jerusalem.

The Jews were also held responsible for the devastation wreaked by a cataclysmic outbreak of bubonic plague, originating in China, in 1348-9, which led to the deaths of about one third of the population of Europe. Such a catastrophe needed a scapegoat. The notion spread that the devilish Jews had poisoned the wells of Christians. This led to attacks on communities and many expulsions throughout Europe. By the end of the fourteenth century the majority of Jews had fled to eastern Europe, where the kings of Poland, bereft of a mercantile class, found them useful to the state.

The negative image of the Jew became deeply rooted in Christian culture. Chaucer recorded the story of an infamous blood libel in Lincoln in 1255 in his Canterbury Tales. Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice again characterised the Jew as villain. In fact it is impossible to find a positive Jewish characterisation until the eighteenth century when in Germany, Lessing's play, *The Jews*, (1743) portrayed a Jew as a hero. The play failed because critics and theatre audiences found it too improbable to believe. It was not until his play Nathan the Wise was published in 1779 that a positive image of the Jew was considered credible.

The Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century brought no respite for the Jewish people. When the Jews failed to convert to the new and reformed Christian religion Luther damned them. Although other Protestant creeds were more tolerant of Judaism than Catholicism due to a certain reverence for "The people of the Book", Luther himself was emphatic that "this damned, rejected race of Jews" be forbidden to practise their religion.

The widespread religious wars of the sixteenth century proved a catalyst for further religious persecution. The first Jewish ghetto was established in Venice in 1516, others followed. The Jews became physically segregated from Christian society.

Before the French Revolution of 1789 the Jews were exposed to hatred in Europe largely because they were the most visible non-Christian minority on the continent. In the 17th and 18th centuries the Enlightenment, and notions of freedom of thought and religious tolerance culminated in the French Revolution. In 1791, the 40,000 Jews of France were for the first time granted equal rights as citizens. By 1878, this had spread to all the countries of western and central Europe.

For the first time Jews entered into the professions, commerce, literature, the arts, sciences and public life. Although only a tiny percentage of the population, a considerable number of Jews achieved great success in many fields of endeavour, particularly in movements for social change.

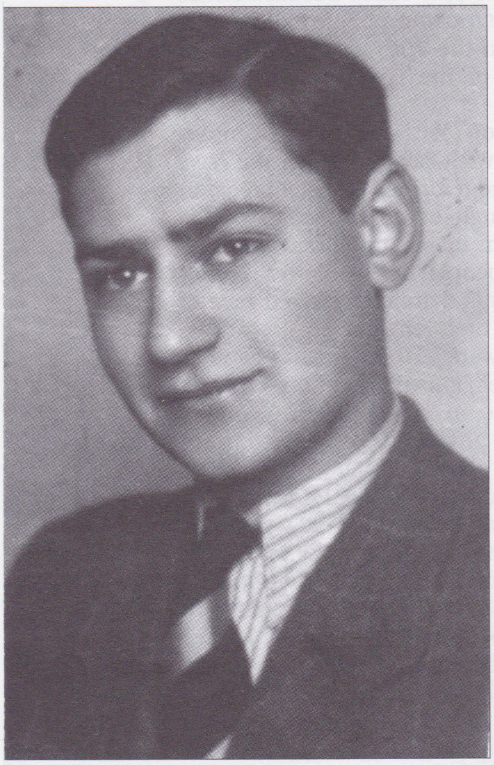
It should be noted that Jews now saw themselves as citizens of the countries in which they lived. However, they were not perceived as such by many of their fellow citizens in the countries of Europe. The prominence of Jewish bankers, such as the Rothschilds, and also of Jewish revolutionaries such as Marx, led many disaffected people to believe that a Jewish power conspiracy was in operation. At the end of the nineteenth century a notorious forgery, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, purported to tell of a Jewish plot to undermine Western civilisation. Both in Germany and Austria political parties arose, whose platform was based purely on antisemitism. Jews were no longer seen as a religious group but as a race. The blood-line was all important. It was these ideas that were taken over by the Nazi party in Germany to such a murderous conclusion. The Holocaust is one of the most blatant examples of powerlessness in history, yet the myth of Jewish power has still not been eradicated.

Top 'Solomon enjoys himself with two pretty English girls' by Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827)
Left 15th century German woodcut showing Jews extracting blood from the the infant Simon's body

Nr.12,909

An interview with Prisoner Number 12,909

by Graeme Atkinson



Above As a young man

Below With Paul Robeson

WERNER HÄNDLER was born in 1920 in Bismarckhütte, Upper Silesia, which became part of Poland under the terms of the post-First World War Versailles Treaty. His family moved to the then German – but now Polish – remote mountain town of Hirschberg, where his father owned what Werner calls "every boy's dream", a toy shop.

Growing up in an observant but liberal Jewish family, Werner went to the local grammar school and became a keen skier. His childhood was that of any other German youngster and was a happy one. The handover of power to the Nazis in January 1933, when he was 13 years old, changed all that.

Says Werner: "The first really shocking proof of what Nazi terrorism meant was the so-called Night of the Long Knives on 30 June 1934, when Hitler ordered the liquidation of almost a thousand leaders of the Nazi SA brownshirts. This event proved that there was no law and justice any more in Germany".

In Werner's opinion, the SA stormtroops were victims of their own naivete and gullibility, believing Hitler's propaganda about a "German socialism" and being convinced that they would be the main beneficiaries of the Nazis' much-vaunted "national revolution": "They swallowed the propaganda of the National Socialist German Workers Party. Every word of this name, a lie!"

The violent antisemitism of the Nazis had been sporadic until then when, for the first time, Hirschberg and its small Jewish population got a taste of what was to come. Werner recalls: "On that evening, five Jewish men were arrested and then set free. They were 'shot while trying to escape' [auf der Flucht erschoßen]. My father was responsible for the Jewish cemetery and he collected the corpses, washed them and buried them."

My second direct experience of their terror was four years later on 9 November 1938 when, in retaliation for the assassination of a German diplomat in Paris, the Nazis organised a massive pogrom in which synagogues all over Germany were set ablaze and tens of thousands of Jews rounded up.

"This pogrom was ordered and organised from start to finish by the government and the Nazi Party," says Werner. "In Hirschberg, the synagogue was not torched because setting it alight would have set fire to adjoining buildings. Nevertheless, it was completely destroyed." The pogrom did not enlist the active support of local people. "In fact," Werner explains, "I did not feel personally afraid. I rode through the town on my bicycle and the only people there were the Nazis. The town was quiet. There were no attacks on people and the shops were not attacked because those owned by Jews, including my father's, had already been forcibly 'Aryanised'." The horrific truth and impact of the night's events only began to unfold in the following days as reports of what had happened in the major cities began to reach Hirschberg.

The arrests did, however, take place. Police came for Werner's father and took him away, obeying an order that all men aged between 18 and 60 should be arrested and taken to concentration camps.

Werner, then only just 18 and an apprentice joiner, escaped the first wave of arrests but was later picked up.

"The local police deliberately forgot me but were later given special orders to arrest me and came three days later … this was the beginning of my life's apprenticeship." Werner was briefly united with his father in nearby Liegnitz and they were transported to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. "The existence of this place and Dachau and Buchenwald were already well known."

At Sachsenhausen, the trains arrived in the night and were emptied violently. The prisoners were brutally beaten by the Nazi guards, something that the Prussian police had desisted from doing on the journey there. The prisoners were forced to run through the camp gates at the double.

On the bleak camp Appelplatz. (roll call square), standing in the freezing cold, Werner and his father were allotted their numbers. "Our heads were shaved. My father got the number 12,821. I got 12,909."

"At first, I was put to work in the brickworks where they were supposed to make the bricks for the future German victory capital, Germania, but they didn't know what to do with us. Eight thousand prisoners were newly arrived and things were chaotic. I ended up shovelling sand from one place to another and back again."

Soon Werner was transferred to a work group outside the camp, making wooden joists. "Here, I was put among a group of experienced political prisoners – Communists, trades unionists and Social Democrats – who taught me how everything was a matter of life and death."

Werner insists that up to Reichspogrommnacht (Kristallnacht) the majority of German Jews were not aware of the peril about to befall them. "But", he says, "they were taught, because, in retrospect one can see that Nazi policy towards the Jews followed what the distinguished German historian Dr Kurt Pätzold characterised as three phases: Verfolgung, Vertreibung, Vernichtung – persecution, expulsion and annihilation."

Werner was a prisoner during the period of persecution and expulsion. Luckily, it was still possible to escape from the mounting horror. He was released at the end of 1938 after his mother went to the Gestapo in Hirschberg and showed them boat tickets for Panama. "On my release, I had to sign a document that said that I would tell nobody what I had seen in the camp and that I was going to leave Germany. I would have signed anything to get out."

By now, Werner had grasped clearly what fascism really meant. He had had excellent teachers on his outside work detail, "men like the former Communist MP and First World War army officer, Müller, who explained to me how the international powers had caved in to the Nazis and had stood aside while Hitler was installing his dictatorship."

"These men", recalls Werner, "gave me two vital pieces of advice. Firstly, 'find and keep to guys like us' … and I did. A lesson for my life. Secondly, tell everybody, wherever you go, that we are on the verge of war."

On 13 April 1939, on the ferry to England, Werner spoke his first English word: war. The sailors on the boat were stubbornly disbelieving, still under the influence of Chamberlain's vacuous "Peace in our Time" policy.

Summing up his brief period in the concentration camp, Werner emphasises his own good fortune. "It was an organised terror system, a regime of torture and death. On 14 November 1938, Leopold Simon, the father of my wife, who I married in 1945, was clubbed to death in Buchenwald because, as a former German army officer, he refused to be treated in that way. He did not understand or refused to understand what the Nazi system was. They sent his ashes to his widow and demanded 56 Reichsmark for his burial."

Werner says that prewar prisoners were shot, clubbed and hanged but not systematically starved to death or gassed. "Treblinka, Maidanek, Auschwitz all came later and with them the industrialised murder of millions."

Werner's elder brother and sister escaped the Holocaust by leaving for Uruguay. "Generally, though, the Jews could leave but could not get in anywhere." Werner came to England. For his parents escape, tragically, was impossible. They were taken to Auschwitz and were murdered there. "In 1948, I was able to go to Poland and finally learn what had happened to them."

Incredibly, despite being a persecuted German-Jewish victim of Hitler's fascism, "an asylum-seeker fleeing Nazi oppression", Werner was interned in 1940 in the Kitchener Camp at Ramsgate by the British authorities. "The internment, though, was easy and we were later transferred to Canada where I worked as a joiner."

During the war, Werner tried to enlist in the British Army but was refused – "maybe they thought I was too political, too left-wing." He returned to England to help as a war worker. Werner is proud of his membership of his first trade union, the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers (ASW), in which he followed his trade as a joiner.

When he announced his intention, in 1945, to return to Germany, his fellow union members in the ASW's Camden Town branch held a collection for his homeward journey and encouraged him to "go there and fight to ensure that these fascist bastards never raise their heads again".

Returning to war-devastated Germany, Werner became a radio journalist, trained by the British, first in Hamburg and later in Berlin. When the Cold War started Werner was relieved of his post, but when the newly founded German Democratic Republic established its radio station, Radio Berlin International, he joined it and worked abroad as a foreign newsman and sports journalist in Rome and in West Germany during the adoption of Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik.

He had no hesitation about going back to Germany: "It was my cultural background. Jews have lived there for over two thousand years. Why should I not be a Jew and a German? Also, I hoped – against hope – that my parents might still be alive."

Werner has remained intensely proud of his Jewish origins and his combative anti-fascist and socialist principles. When he retired from radio journalism, he did not give up the struggle. Exactly ten years ago, two members of *Searchlight*'s present staff had the great honour of having him as their guide on a visit by a delegation of anti-fascists from western Europe to the Sachsenhausen memorial. They still treasure this experience.

Today, Werner still fights for the interests of Sachsenhausen survivors, as general secretary of the International Sachsenhausen Committee, and points out how hundreds of former prisoners, especially in the Ukraine, live in abject, heart-rending poverty and have never received one pfennig compensation for the torments they endured.

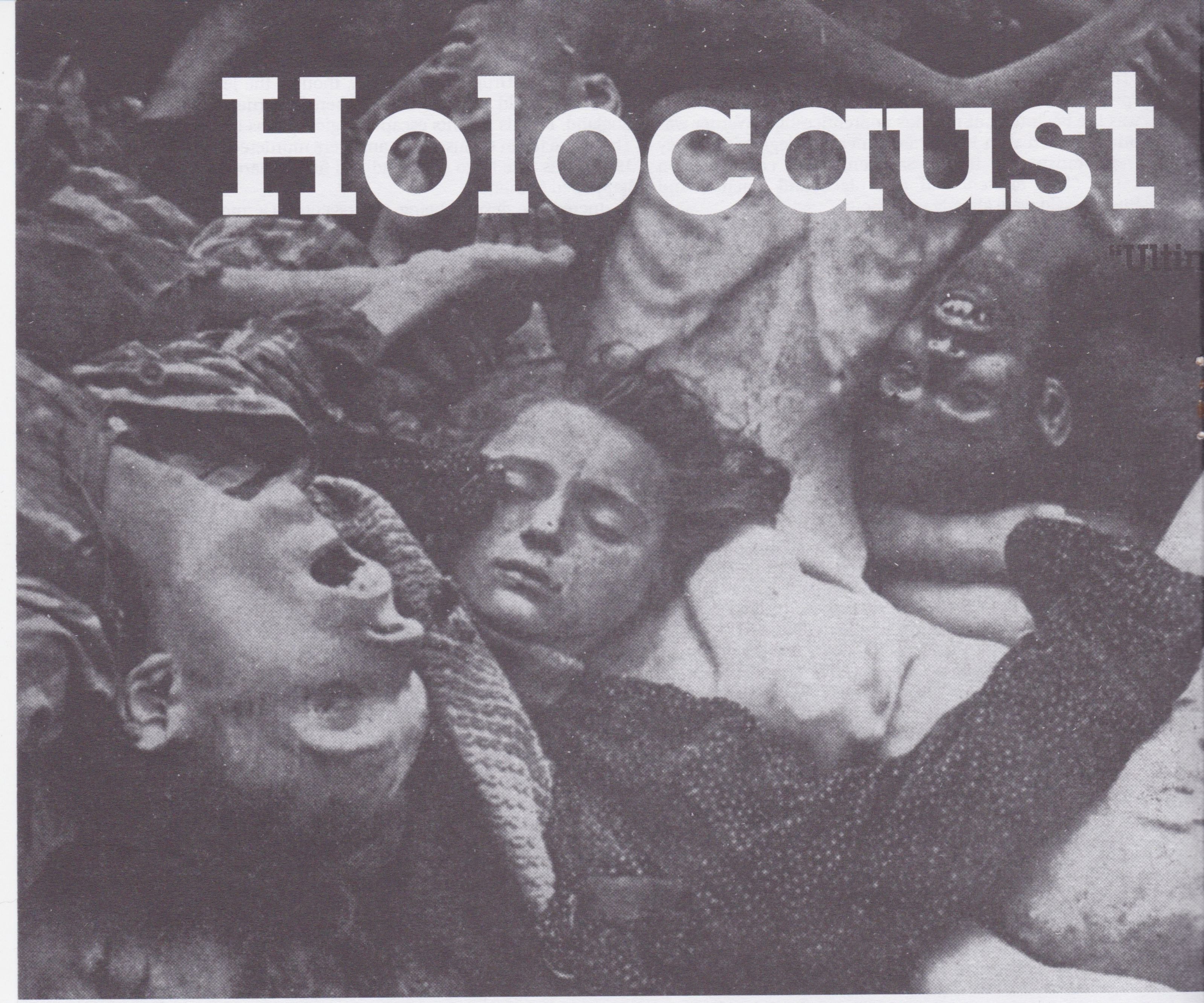
Now a robust, wryly humorous 78-year-old living in a cosy east Berlin flat with his wife, Werner – who "hates the term general secretary because I do not like generals" – is also very alert to the revival of fascism in Germany but warns "the danger is not so much the shaven-headed hooligans with their baseball bats".

"The danger in Germany today", he emphasises, "comes from the middle of society, from those who have almost demolished the right of asylum – which enabled me to survive in England and for which I am forever grateful to the British people – in Germany. It is the government, not the nazis, which has taken away this right and which increasingly blames foreigners and all things foreign for the sickness of this society."

And antisemitism in Germany today? "It is growing and a danger, but it is the foreigners who, till now, are the target of hate. We must fight all these manifestations tooth-and-nail and I will do so as long as my health allows," he vows.

Those who have had the privilege of meeting Werner and enjoying his hospitality know well the truth of this pledge.

Holocaust



▲ Holocaust
The evidence denied

HOLOCAUST DENIAL is essential for today's nazis to rehabilitate the murderous memory of Hitler and Nazi Germany. Revisionism, specifically the process of denying or minimising the Holocaust, has been their dominant propaganda theme since the last months of Hitler's thousand year Reich. The flip side of Holocaust denial is equally enticing for modern-day nazis, for it follows that if the Holocaust didn't really happen, then there must be a massive worldwide Jewish conspiracy which perpetuates the fraud.

From its inception, Holocaust denial has been perpetuated by a relatively small band of propagandists, their message eagerly consumed by all parts of the nazi and antisemitic spectrum. The leading German far-right politician and publisher Gerhard Frey has a lengthy track record at the heart of this campaign of obfuscation and lies.

In Germany, Frey organises revisionist gatherings under the banner "Wahrheit Macht Frei", (Truth Sets You Free), a chilling parody of the mocking sign over the gates of Auschwitz "Arbeit Macht Frei" (Work Sets You Free). He was a director of the leading postwar German Nazi "intellectual" monthly, *Nation Europa*, which as early as June 1952 referred to "The fairy tale of the six million murdered Jews". This came only two months after the same magazine had said of the Holocaust, "The manner of the solution was out of harmony with the German people's sense of justice". By 1956 *Nation Europa* was once more acknowledging the Holocaust, only this time it was blamed upon "a group of secret agents acting behind the back of the German people, German soldiers, even behind the back of National Socialists and the hundreds of thousands of SS men fighting on all fronts".

These dual and manifestly contradictory themes of outright denial and distancing the German people and Nazi leadership from the Holocaust appeared alongside each other for many years. Nazi veterans' publications of the 1950s and 1960s are replete with excuses for the Holocaust, as outright denial would have been an obvious nonsense for their knowing readership. It was only when the new generation of nazis had come of age that the time was ripe for widespread, outright

and denial

ately, Holocaust denial is nothing more than Jew-hatred.”

denial. Frey’s favourite British speaker, David Irving, was one of the last to maintain the “Hitler never knew” approach, until he used the fraudulent *Leuchter Report* in the late 1980s as his excuse to embrace denial and fall back into line with Frey and the leading American denial publishers, the Institute for Historical Review.

The 1950s had also seen the development of revisionist themes by Nazi fugitives in South America. In 1957, Hitler’s favourite fighter ace, Colonel Hans Ulrich Rudel, then head of the Argentina-based Nazi war veterans network, the Kameradenwerk, launched a formal campaign to “expose as a hoax” the Holocaust. Frey organised a memorial service to Rudel after his death in 1982, at which Irving was the guest speaker. Frey named a memorial prize after Rudel, which was won by Irving in 1985.

It is the United States, however, which has been the most prolific area for denial propaganda, now dominated by the Institute for Historical Review (IHR). The IHR is the world’s leading publisher of denial propaganda and the annual IHR convention attracts deniers from around the world. Irving first addressed the convention in 1983, after telling the *Sunday People* “I’m doing it just for the fee … I know their reputation and the odours hanging around them …”.

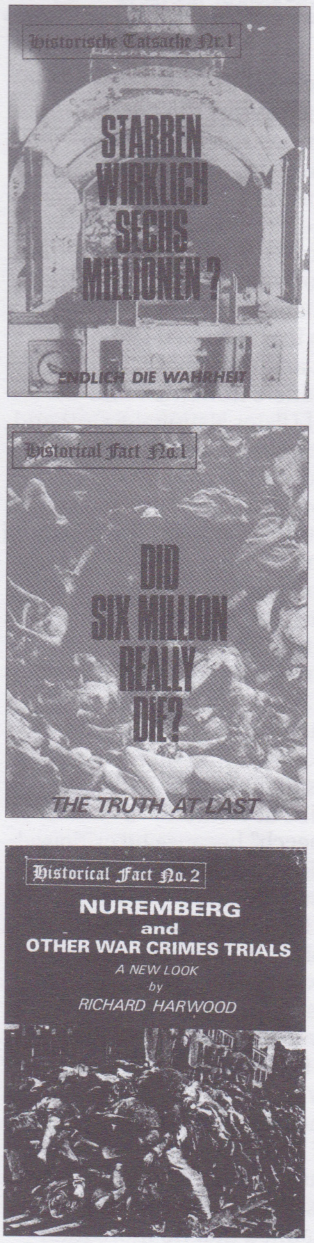
Irving is now one of the star attractions at these conventions, and his Focal Point Publications is organising its own so-called “Conference on Real History” in Cleveland, Ohio in May 1999. It remains to be seen if the conference will be in co-operation with the IHR, or in competition with it. Irving is increasingly active in the USA, and his 1998 US tour included meetings in New Jersey and Cleveland. Irving’s increasing interest in the US market corresponds with his being banned from numerous countries, including Germany, Australia and, most recently, the site of Auschwitz – which the BBC had asked him to visit. In Britain, Irving is currently fighting libel actions against the authors Deborah Lipstadt and Gita Sereny.

Irving’s relative public inactivity left the would-be BNP leader, Nick Griffin, trying to capture the revisionist limelight at his trial this April. Griffin joined the rush of deniers trying to emulate the martyrdom of the German-Canadian Ernst Zundel, a nazi cause-célèbre after the publicity of his trials and retrials in Canada for “spreading false news”. Griffin’s trial and suspended sentence for his race-hate publication, *The Rune*, saw his collusion with Europe’s foremost denier, Robert Faurisson, who was himself convicted in Paris the same month. Griffin’s commitment to Holocaust denial and its attendant rehabilitation of the Nazi era is completely in line with BNP policy, as stated by the party’s national activities organiser, Richard Edmonds, “Let us attack and expose these lies that are at the very base of the present world order … Take away that deceitful weapon from our enemy’s hands, and his position will soon become indefensible!”

Legislation against Holocaust denial is increasingly widespread, as governments come to terms with its role as an inverted morality prop for nazism. Deniers have attempted to circumvent increased legislation by using the Internet, and an international revisionist conference in Adelaide this August has been touted as an example for future conferences to be held over the Net. If this proceeds, it should serve to encourage the growing refusal of Internet providers to carry racist and denial material.

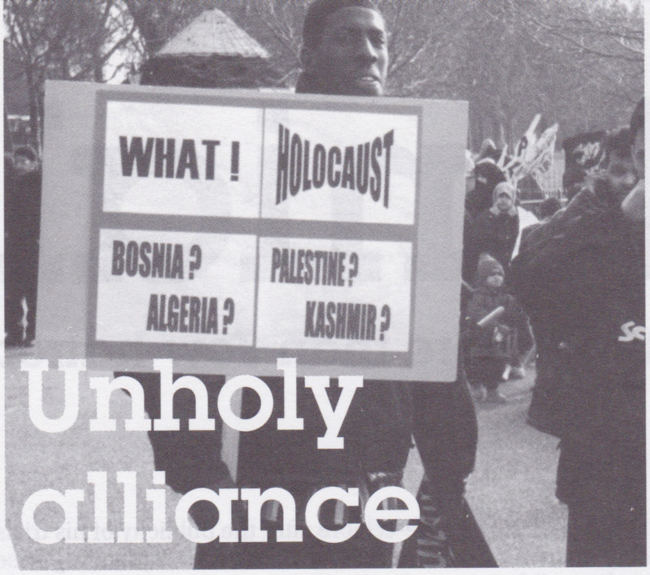
German anti-denial legislation is particularly strict, which has led to Brighton’s Anthony Hancock publishing numerous denial tracts on behalf of his German counterparts. This has resulted in complaints by the German authorities. A new Hancock publication about the Majdanek concentration camp has been produced on behalf of the recently convicted Swiss denier, Jurgen Graf, and the Italian Carlo Mattogno, both of whom are editorial advisors to the IHR. German legislators have had more success with the stripping of Jean Marie le Pen’s European Parliamentary immunity to clear the way for his prosecution in Munich for having described the gas chambers as “a mere detail of history”.

Ultimately, Holocaust denial is nothing more than Jew-hatred. In the words of Combat 18’s *Redwatch*, “David Irving the historian is causing quite a stir with his claims about the holocaust our view on the holocaust is if it didn’t happen it should have, if it did happen it’s a pity they didn’t KILL THEM ALL, the subhuman jew must die if our race is to surive”. [sic].


Historische Tatsache Nr.1
STARBEN WIRKLICH SECHS MILLIONEN?
ENDLICH DIE WAHRHEIT
Historical Fact No.1
DID SIX MILLION REALLY DIE?
THE TRUTH AT LAST
Historical Fact No. 2
NUREMBERG and OTHER WAR CRIMES TRIALS
A NEW LOOK
by
RICHARD HARWOOD

Holocaust denial
Printed in Britain by the Hancock Press in Sussex

Unholy alliance


WHAT !
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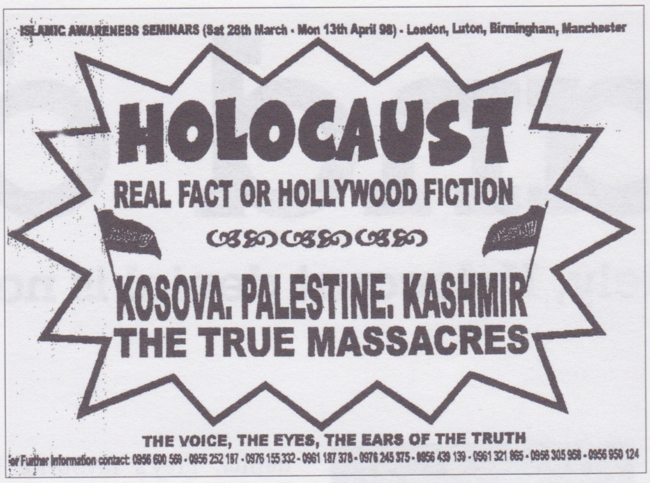
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HOLOCAUST

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Trafalgar Square, Sunday, 28 June, 1998: A public meeting at the foot of Nelson's Column has the attention hundreds of people, including supporters, passers-by and curious tourists. A speaker tells the crowd, "The Jewish Holocaust was a fabrication, and everybody knows that … how wicked, how evil these Jews are … they don't even deserve the death of a dog". But this speech was not made by John Tyndall or Colin Jordan; this speech was made by Avais Khan of the radical Muslim group Al-Muhajiroun.

Two months earlier, another speaker, Yacub Zaki, told an Al-Muhajiroun demonstration – outside celebrations in North London to mark the 50th anniversary of Israel's independence – "nobody was gassed to death in the concentration camps, but one million Jews may have died from typhus". Al-Muhajiroun has also distributed Holocaust denial material from the Institute for Historical Review over the Internet. So why should an Islamic group, which originates from the Middle East and wants to establish an Islamic state, be interested in the antisemitic libel that is Holocaust denial?

While nazis developed Holocaust denial to rehabilitate National Socialism as an ideology, Muslims appear to have nothing to gain by feeding this perversion of history. However, the perception that Israel was founded out of Western guilt for the Holocaust has fed the simplistic, naive idea that Holocaust denial benefits the Palestinian struggle for independence by undermining Israel's legitimacy. As Zaki claimed, "David Irving has the right idea, destroy the Holocaust myth and you have destroyed Israel". Canadian denier Ernst Zundel's website put it even more simply: "There were no 'six million' deaths, and there were no 'gas chambers'! Because there were no 'six million' and no 'gas chambers', there are no moral claims deriving from them!"

In order to use nazi propaganda, its protagonists have to play down the threat to the Muslim community by the extreme right. Ahmed Huber, a regular speaker at the Muslim Institute in London, came up with an astonishing whitewash of nazi violence against Muslims in an interview with *The Line*, a newsletter published in London for Muslim converts. Huber claimed, "the extreme right in Europe is a gross exaggeration by the American and Zionist-controlled media ... there is not a real danger from the right for the Muslims". It is not surprising, when he denies the crimes being committed daily against his own community, that Huber is prepared to deny crimes committed against Jewish communities over 50 years ago. Huber is one of several would-be Muslim intellectuals and community leaders who are disgracing their community.

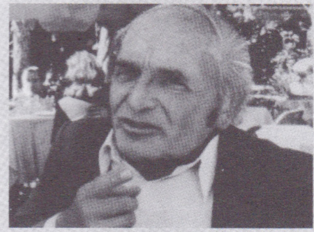
Yacub Zaki is a deputy director of the Muslim Institute in London, and was a visiting Professor at Harvard University. He, perhaps more than anyone else in this country, has tried to encourage Muslims to embrace Holocaust denial. At a conference of the Muslim Institute in 1992, Zaki urged the audience to buy the *Leuchter Report* (which attempts to demonstrate that there were no gas chambers at Auschwitz), and proudly claimed to have met David Irving. In May of this year, he told a South African interviewer that he had supported Nick Griffin in his trial for producing the racist BNP magazine *The Rune*. Unsurprisingly, Zaki had no comment to make on *The Rune*'s campaign against the building of a new mosque in Morden. The Muslim Institute itself has sold its books through *National Front News*, and its newspaper, *Crescent International*, has published letters from the Third Positionist David Kerr (then of Ulster National Front) and from the American antisemite Michael Hoffman II. Other organisations have established similar connections. The Algerian Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) sent a speaker to a conference of Patrick Harrington's Third Way last year, and Al-Hoda, the Islamic book shop on Charing Cross Road, has sold publications from Don Martin's Bloomfield Books, which in turn distributes the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and other antisemitic texts.

Most disappointing is the readiness of some who would speak on behalf of the Muslim community to embrace the far right when they attack Israel or Jews, without recognising that this can only rebound on Muslims themselves. The Muslim newspaper *Q-News* called Zaki's antisemitic diatribe at Wembley "a characteristically informed speech" because he criticised Israel, rather than exposing his slanders of the Jewish people, a potential ally against the extreme right. The case of Roger Garaudy, the French Muslim convert convicted of denying crimes against humanity in February, became a cause célèbre in the Muslim world. The Garaudy Support Committee, based in Qatar, established an Internet site in his defence; *Al-Khaleej*, a newspaper in the United Arab Emirates, raised over $75,000 for Garaudy from its readers (including $50,000 from the wife of Sheikh Zayed, ruler of the United Arab Emirates); and Garaudy's offending book, *The Founding Myths of Israeli Politics*, has been translated into Arabic and distributed throughout the Muslim world. Former Iranian President Rafsanjani, after meeting Garaudy in Tehran, himself claimed that no more than 200,000 Jews died during the Second World War.

Muslims deserve better leadership than this, and need leaders who will take a principled stand against their enemies on the far right, rather than supping with the devil in a misguided attempt to undermine Israel. The far right has not only encouraged racist violence against Muslims, but also campaigns against the building of mosques, calls for an end to Halal slaughter, and has supporters who fought with the Serbs and the Croats against Muslims in Bosnia. Holocaust denial acts as the glue in an antisemitic alliance which includes Islamic groups, Arab leaders and nazis. It taints all who espouse it, however mistakenly.

Second to none

The work of the Office of Special Investigations



Searchlight readers have long been familiar with the work of the US Office of Special Investigations under its director Eli Rosenbaum. Few of those who saw Eli doorstepping the war criminal Antanas Gecas in Scotland under the full glare of the TV cameras a few years ago will ever forget the scene in which Gecas struggles to slam the door on the Scottish reporter and Eli tells him there is no place to hide. At that time Eli had taken leave from the OSI to work as an investigator for the World Jewish Congress but he soon returned to his desk in Washington, where Searchlight met him several years ago.

After the war and in the early Cold War period the machinations of the Allied powers resulted in several war criminals being granted safe conduct. By 1979 the US government had at long last realised the enormity of their misdeeds and set out to rectify at least some of the injustice with the formation of an organisation specifically to investigate Nazi war criminals in order to deport them from, or prevent them entering, the USA.

The OSI brought together several young and forceful Jewish lawyers who saw their work both as a means of redeeming America's earlier errors and as an expression of their own righteous indignation that the mass killers of their co-religionists had not been brought to justice and that hundreds of them were living in comfort and security in the USA, some even drawing pensions for their dirty work.

Today the OSI has a staff of 26 including lawyers, historians and other experts. Its budget in 1997 exceeded US$3 million (£1,830,000), but its success rate provides ample justification for the cost.

The OSI has brought 108 cases to revoke US citizenship, 61 of which were successful. It has removed 48 persons from the USA, including three to face trial abroad. Sixty thousand people have been placed on the OSI "Watch List" for possible exclusion from the United States. Since 1989 the OSI's work has led to 143 people being excluded at US ports of entry.

The OSI is currently proceeding with 19 cases in the US courts. To date it has opened 1,489 cases, of which 1,220 have been concluded.

Four major reports have been issued on Klaus Barbie, Robert Jan Verbelen, Josef Mengele and Kurt Waldheim. The investigation into Waldheim was one of the OSI's most high profile cases and led to Waldheim being excluded from the USA despite his position as President of Austria.

Another case that helped build the reputation of the OSI was that of the vicious Nazi death camp guard, Hermine Braunsteiner-Ryan, who had married a US soldier and escaped from Germany to the USA. Years later the OSI caught up with her and had her deported. In 1995, ABC-TV stated that the OSI was "the most successful Nazi-hunting unit in the world". The OSI also won awards from legal bodies and several international Jewish organisations.

The opening of Communist files on war crimes in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has brought a flood of new cases and pressure is being put on the Baltic States and others to prosecute Nazi war criminals and collaborators living there or who have been deported there from the USA. Croatia, keen to be part of the European Union, has been forced to consider such action. The OSI has recently also started to look at the wartime role of allegedly neutral countries such as Argentina, Sweden, Spain, Portugal and Turkey, as well as Switzerland's part in handling assets stolen by the Nazis from their victims.

The OSI is currently proceeding against Vincas Valkavickas, lately of Chicago, who has been implicated in the wartime massacre of 3,700 Jews in Lithuania. In another case the OSI moved against Walter Berezowskyj for his part in the Nazi murder machine in Poland. Berezowskyj was trained at Trawniki, where most of the Auschwitz guards of non-German background were trained.

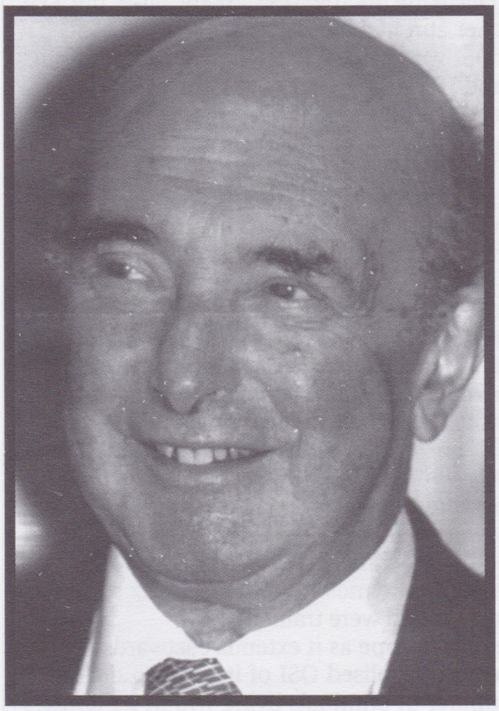
Perhaps the new Europe as it extends eastwards should consider forming a centralised OSI of its own to deal with the still large number of criminals living within its borders who have the blood of millions on their hands.

Top The 'Butcher of Lyons' Klaus Barbie
Left Antanas Gecas

Mission Statement of the OSI

"The Office of Special Investigations (OSI) was created in September 1979 by Order No. 851-79 of the Attorney General of the United States in order to carry out all of the investigative and litigation activities of the Department of Justice involving individuals who, prior to and during World War II, under the supervision of or in association with the Nazi government of Germany and its allies, ordered, incited, assisted, or otherwise participated in the persecution of any person because of race, religion, national origin or political opinion. OSI is responsible for detecting, investigating and taking legal action to denaturalize and deport/remove such individuals or prevent them from entering the United States. The unit assists the U.S. Immigration & Naturalization Service and the Department of State in screening applicants for entrance to the United States and petitioners for naturalization. OSI is also responsible for assisting in the extradition of Axis criminals to stand criminal trial abroad. Additionally, OSI is the lead Justice Department component in the inter-agency federal effort, commenced in 1996, to trace the fate of gold and other assets looted from Holocaust victims."

Gerry Gable on a fighter against antisemitism and racism



Baron Moss
30 June 1923
6 February 1998

WHEN BARON Moss passed away in February this year few people outside his immediate circle knew the debt of gratitude that the anti-fascist movement owed him, Britain's Jewish community in particular.

In his 75 years he had lived a varied life that many would envy. Born in the East End of London in the 1920s of parents who had fled from the oppression and antisemitism of Tsarist Russia, he saw his hard-working father, a baker by trade, rise by his own efforts to become the owner of a small cinema in Mile End. His father named it La Boheme, not because he was pretentious but because the opera was his great passion, writes Gerry Gable.

Just before the war his father sold up and the family moved to Brondesbury in northwest London. It was here, where Baron founded "The New Club", a club for local young people, that he first met the young Reg Freeson, later to become the first editor of *Searchlight* and a junior Housing Minister in Harold Wilson's Labour government of the 1960s. Although Britain was at war with Nazi Germany, the two youngsters found that antisemitism was alive and well in Brondesbury, especially in the large Polish community that had settled there.

Baron's parents had hoped he would attend an aeronautical college but he failed in that direction, which may have proved a bonus in the long term. He turned to his love of the arts and for a time was a volunteer scene painter at London's internationally renowned Unity Theatre, where many famous actors of the future got their first theatrical breaks. It was there that he met his wife and lifelong comrade, Joan. They became engaged at an annual dinner of the Communist newspaper, the *Daily Worker*, at which Paul Robeson was a guest. He was now working as a map artist for the *Daily Worker*, sketching for readers the plans of wartime battles against fascism.

Although he had never been fully fit he played his part in the war effort working as a "Bevin Boy" down the Yorkshire pits, living in a two-up-two-down railway cottage in Mexbrough. His health deteriorated through working at the pit face and he was invalided out of the service just in time to take part in campaigning, in Sheffield, for the huge Labour victory of 1945.

In late 1945 Baron and Joan returned to London and their first child was born. Baron returned to work at the *Daily Worker* and later became its publicity director.

It was at this time that he met Maurice Essex. Maurice had been the election agent for Phil Piratin, who became the Communist Party MP for Stepney, scene of the great victory in Cable Street over Mosley's Blackshirts in 1936. Piratin, author of one of the most famous anti-fascist books ever written, *Our Flag Stays Red*, won the election because of his open fight against fascism and with the support of the area's huge Jewish population.

I met Baron when I worked at the *Daily Worker* for a year in 1952-53. He was a friendly and intelligent man with a great sense of humour and always helpful to youngsters on the staff.

Baron left to set up a series of advertising agencies. By the early 1960s he had major contracts with leading companies such as Marks and Spencer. His success in business did not result in him giving up his commitment to fighting fascism and in 1962 he was among the core group that helped establish Searchlight. During the following years he also chaired the committee running the Jewish defence organisation, the "1962 Committee" or "62 Group", a direct descendent of the 43 Group of postwar anti-fascists.

This was not the easiest of tasks. He had to defend the Jewish community against increasingly violent and well organised attacks from Britain's nazis, in the face of outmoded ideas on Jewish defence among the community's own official leadership, and at the same time build lasting associations with the broader anti-fascist movement. His successful combination of militancy and intelligence gathering led to calls for the official bodies to take more notice of the work of both Searchlight and the 62 Group, and by the late 1960s Baron had created the blueprint for today's Jewish communal defence systems.

It was a delight to attend meetings chaired by Baron where Tories, Labour Party supporters and communists, secular and religious people, could sit together and work together for a common cause.

Baron's continued poor health limited the amount of work he could do but he found time until the early 1990s to work with various bodies successfully brokering defence deals.

Despite this heavy work load he wrote two novels and many articles and painted often in the style of the great Mexican muralists. He fell in love with Mexico, where he found some respite from his ill health, and he would journey there each year to live very simply with the ordinary people of that troubled land, sometimes becoming involved in campaigning for greater democracy there.

When a full and proper history of the development of Jewish communal defence in Britain comes to be written, Baron Moss's contribution to the fight against fascism and antisemitism will find a prominent place.

TUC fringe focuses on racism

The 1998 TUC Conference took place in September under the slogan "organising for fairness". Its agenda focused on employment rights for workers, addressing subjects such as the national minimum wage.

Racism was not a central issue in terms of motions. Nevertheless concern over racism was expressed by the National Association of Probation Officers, which put forward an emergency motion highlighting the plight of asylum seekers and refugees and calling for the restoration of benefit rights.

Before introducing Neville Lawrence, father of murdered teenager Stephen Lawrence, Bob Purkiss, Equalities Officer of the TGWU, told the audience that regarding black people "we still see unequal access to education, public services, housing and jobs … We have a higher level of exclusions from school, higher levels of unemployment and a higher level of discrimination at the place of work." He congratulated the trade union movement for its pioneering efforts in fighting discrimination but warned that the perception of race relations by black people is worsening. Despite the creation of structures designed to encourage greater participation of black members, the subject of racism in the trade union movement is essentially a peripheral issue in a movement that Bob characterised as "male, stale and pale".

The heartfelt sense of injustice and strain suffered by the Lawrence family was evident as Neville stood before Congress and wept silently. In turn, Neville moved many delegates to tears when he told them of his family's long battle for justice. John Edmonds on behalf of the TUC presented Neville with a cheque for the Stephen Lawrence Family Campaign.

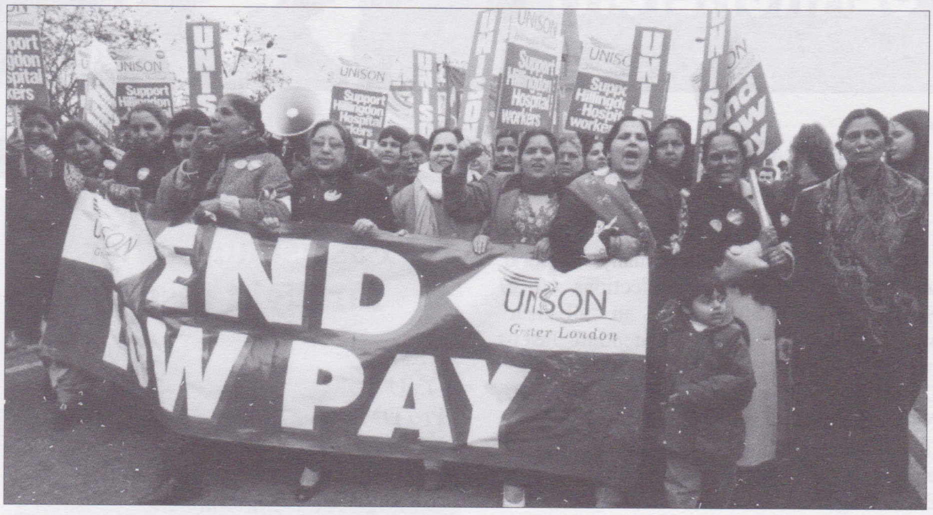
In the workplace

☛ A TUC report entitled *Double Discrimination – Older Black Workers and the Need for a New Deal* warned that older black workers are twice as likely to be out of work as their white colleagues.

☛ A recent report by the Commission for Racial Equality on appointments to senior hospital doctor posts found white workers twice as likely to be shortlisted for jobs and three times as likely to be employed as black or Asian workers. White employees are three times more likely to get merit awards, which can add tens of thousands of pounds to a doctor's earnings.

☛ An MSF study carried out last year showed that there has been a sharp drop in the number of black people in nursing. Fewer than one per cent of nurses under 25 were black compared to nine per cent of those over 55.

☛ A quarter of Britain's universities are using poaching and secretive appointments to improve their Research Assessment Exercise performance, undermining fairness and openness in university appointments, according to a report published recently by the Association of University Teachers.



The Hillingdon strikers and their supporters on the march in London during their long campaign

Neville Lawrence's presence ensured that racism was the main issue on the TUC fringe, with five separate and well attended meetings. At a meeting jointly organised by the TUC Race Relations Committee and BECTU, the panel highlighted problems such as institutionalised racism within the police force. Neville Lawrence addressed that meeting and also another meeting organised by the Anti Nazi League, where he was joined by Glyn Ford MEP, who among other things talked about the rise of the nazi music scene in Europe.

At the Free Satpal Ram campaign meeting the audience was urged to write to the Home Office and take up his case – Satpal Ram was jailed after defending himself against a racist attack. The National Assembly Against Racism held a well attended meeting that looked at the anti-racist agenda for trade unions and the workplace in the coming year.

The Trade Union Friends of Searchlight (TUFS) meeting received an enthusiastic response from the audience who were addressed by Mary Davis from NATFHE, Bob Purkiss and Searchlight's European editor, Graeme Atkinson. Ms Davis thanked TUFS for the work it had done nationally with her union in providing information on Patrick Harrington, a once prominent National Front member and now a leader of Third Way, who is on a teacher training course.

Hillingdon victory

Strikers from Hillingdon hospital celebrated their reinstatement last month after winning their three-year-long strike.

The 20 strikers, mainly female Asian domestic and catering workers, were sacked from the west London hospital by the private health contractor Pall Mall after they went on strike against wage cuts and changes in their conditions of employment.

An industrial tribunal ruled that the women should all be reinstated without any cuts in their pay or conditions and that most of them should be awarded maximum compensation of £1,300.

As we go to press UNISON's solicitors are finalising the compensation awards and negotiating with the new contractor at the hospital over reinstatement.

The dispute started when 200 catering, domestic and portering staff at Hillingdon hospital were offered new contracts from 1 October 1995. The new terms of employment cut their pay and holidays and abolished their London weighting pay allowance.

Remember Blair Peach

A broadly-based trade union led committee has been formed to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the killing of the anti-fascist teacher Blair Peach. Planned events include an educational conference at Goldsmith's College, London, on 6 February. Among the keynote speakers will be Doug McAvoy, General Secretary of the NUT.

A commemorative demonstration will be held in Southall on 24 April and educational initiatives will take place around the country sponsored by Tower Hamlets Education Authority and the local NUT branch.

Searchlight magazine and Trade Union Friends of Searchlight have added their names to the list of sponsors of the commemoration. We shall publish more details as they become available.

TRADE UNION FRIENDS OF SEARCHLIGHT

Trade union branches are invited to join TUFS for £50 a year, for which they will receive *Searchlight* every month, updates on trade union related issues, special rates for training, education and future publications and Searchlight Educational Trust's widely acclaimed handbook, *When Hate Comes to Town*.

Get your branch to join. Further details and application forms are available from Searchlight, 37B New Cavendish Street, London W1M 8JR.

SEARCHLIGHT ON THE WORLD

Too early to write off German fascists

Fascist and other far-right results

REP	905,200
DVU	600,194
Pro DM	429,468
NPD	126,148
Bund freier Bürger (BfB)	121,220
Ökologische Demokratische Partei (ÖDP)	97,709
Total (4.6%)	2,280,219

At first sight the poor performance by the far right in Germany's federal, regional and local elections on 27 September could be taken as an "all clear" signal. None of the three contending fascist parties – the Republikaner (REP), the Deutsche Volksunion (DVU) and the Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD) – even came near the 5% barrier for election to the German parliament, the Bundestag.

With 1.8% nationally, the REP remains the strongest fascist electoral party, followed by the DVU with 1.2%. The NPD, with only 0.3%, lagged far behind the others, overtaken even by the right-wing Pro DM party, a newcomer to the electoral contest.

However, if the votes of the three fascist parties and three non-fascist far-right groups are aggregated, the total vote, at 4.6%, comes worryingly close to the threshold. Had these warring factions been able to present a united list of candidates under a single party banner, they might well have achieved election.

The fascist vote showed clear regional variations. The DVU ensconced itself in the east, while the REP performed best in Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria and Berlin. The DVU attracted about 5% of all first-time voters in the eastern states. Most interesting is the fact that despite numerous indications that the DVU would do well, the party fared badly in Sachsen-Anhalt where it had scored a spectacular 13.9% in regional elections in April. In September it took only 3.2%.

The Sachsen-Anhalt result was, nevertheless, the DVU's best, followed by those in Thüringen, Brandenburg and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. In the former West German states, the DVU's best results were in Berlin and Hamburg with around 2.1% in each. Of some concern was the the support for the DVU in run-down parts of Berlin such as Marzahn, Lichtenberg and Hohenschönhausen, where the fascist vote was more than 8%.

The NPD failed to reach its target, getting 1.6% less than in 1994. However, the present NPD is a rather different animal from the one let loose then. Gone are the jailed Günter Deckert and his mainly historical revisionist propaganda. They have been replaced by Udo Voigt and a collection of leading officers from banned organisations, who pursue a militant campaign around social issues and present the NPD as a gathering point for all nazis and right-wing extremists. In the light of these changes, its result was fairly creditable.

In Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, where the NPD conducted its most aggressive campaign, the party got 10,688 votes (1%). In Stralsund, the convicted nazi terrorist killer Manfred Roeder stood as the party's star candidate and pulled in 2.1%. The NPD's result in the separate regional parliamentary election was a similarly modest 1%, ensuring that, despite predictions, the party will not make its entrance in the Schwerin assembly.

The NPD did better in neighbouring Brandenburg, grabbing 45,000 (3.5%) first votes and 0.8% of second votes. In the local elections there, the NPD got only 0.5%, enough to take seats on two local councils. In Frankfurt an der Oder, the scene of much organised fascist violence, René Wagner was elected for the NPD, together with a member of the BfB, while in Fürstenwalde the NPD increased its seats to two.

The fascists reacted to the results in various ways. The REP seemed relieved that its support had dropped by only 1% from 1994. It was also delighted at the poor results of the DVU and the certainty that Rolf Schlierer, the party leader, will reject any collaboration between the REP and DVU or NPD.

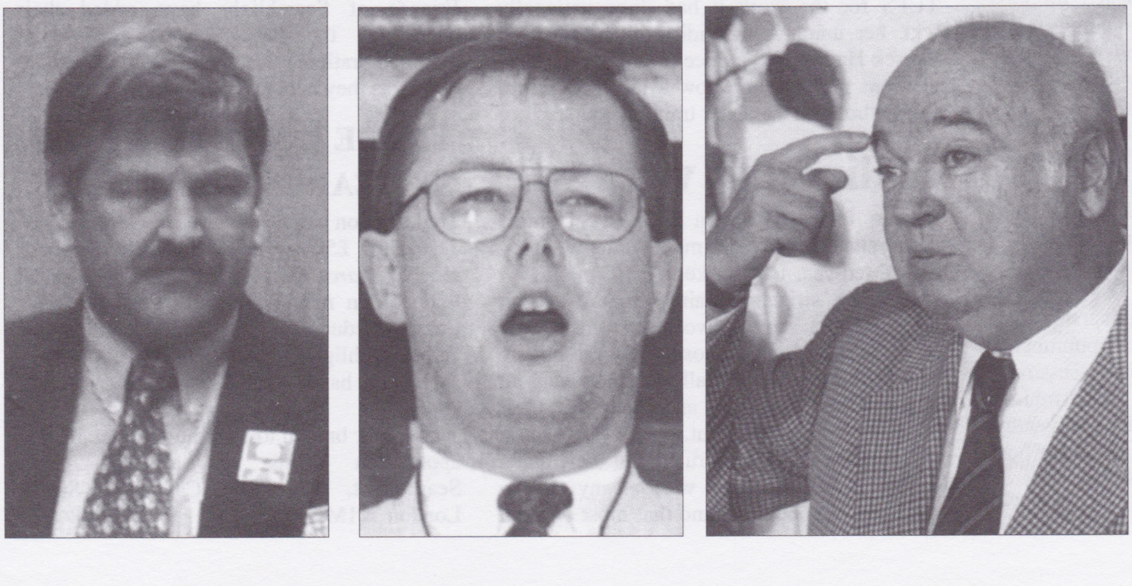
Collaboration, however, is exactly what the DVU is looking for. The day after the election, a press release from the DVU's Munich bunker reported that the party's multimillionaire leader, Gerhard Frey, had offered to start talks with Schlierer. Unity between the DVU, which has the funds, the REP, which has the professionalism, and the NPD, which has the grassroots activists, could spell serious danger in the future.

Unity will not occur in the short term and so the DVU could only celebrate the fact that it is the strongest extreme-right party in the east and that "in the younger voters are to be found the electoral support of the future".

As for the NPD, Voigt put a brave face on his party's performance in the knowledge that state cash support, based on the number of votes cast in these elections, will be ploughed into the NPD's campaign in next year's Saxony regional elections.

The NPD has a lot of members in Saxony and reckons it has a good chance of leaping over the 5% barrier. It remains to be seen how long the NPD can continue to masquerade as a legitimate electoral party while at the same time acting as a rallying point for the street activists of banned organisations. If the NPD fails to win electoral success, many of the young nazis, who have enthusiastically supported the electoral stance so far, might start to drift away.

Anti-fascists have no grounds for complacency over these results. The potential vote of between 12 and 17% for extreme right-wing parties, registered in a series of



Disunited they stand: fascist party leaders Udo Voigt (NPD), Rolf Schlierer (REP) and Gerhard Frey (DVU)

independent surveys before the election, has not evaporated. Rather, it was swallowed up in an orgy of tactical voting around the main issue of the election, Kohl or Schröder, which eclipsed almost everything in the last ten days of the campaign.

This question will not figure in next year's campaigns for the regional elections in Saxony, the council elections in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and the city parliament elections in Berlin. The results then could be far less comforting.

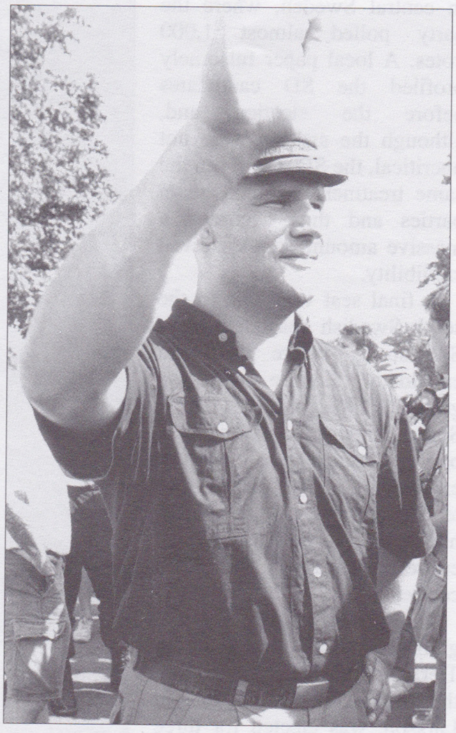
From our German correspondent

NPD marches through pogrom city

Almost 3,000 mainly Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD) nazis paraded unopposed through a Rostock suburb on 19 September, a week before the German general election.

The demonstration, which rounded off the NPD's election campaign, was initially banned by the city authorities, but permitted after a court challenge. The only restriction was that the fascists were prohibited from marching through Lichtenhagen, scene of the infamous August 1992 pogrom in which nazi-led mobs attacked and set fire to a block of flats housing Vietnamese contract workers. Instead, a broad anti-racist coalition of local citizens' and anti-fascist groups was permitted to organise a peace festival in front of the building, attended by 15,000 people.

The anti-racist coalition *Bunt statt Braun*, in which the academic leadership of Rostock University participated, also organised a protest march by several hundred people from the city centre to Lichtenhagen on the morning of the festival.



Security squad organiser: Thomas "Steiner" Wulff

Barred from Lichtenhagen, the fascists staged their demonstration in Dierkow, another big windswept high-rise estate on the outskirts of Rostock. Dierkow, bordered to the east by a motorway, to the west by a river, to the south by a major road and to the north by Rostock harbour, was an ideal place for the police to maintain control and the fascists were escorted, via the motorway, to their assembly point without any problems.

On the scene were not only the entire leadership of the NPD and its youth wing, the Junge Nationaldemokraten (JN), but also some leading "independent" nazis from banned organisations, such as Christian Worch and Thomas "Steiner" Wulff. The convicted nazi terrorist killer Manfred Roeder, an NPD candidate but not a party member, was given pride of place at the head of the demonstration.

The non-NPD fascists contributed to the organisation of the march. Worch drove the loudspeaker van and took the microphone when the NPD leaders were absent. Wulff organised the security squad and Bernd Stehmann from Bielefeld made sure that the nazis marched in rank. A notable feature was the debut of the fascists' own well organised "medical corps", named the *Braunes Kreuz* (Brown Cross). Residents of Dierkow gave almost no positive response to the fascist interlopers prowling through their estate.

Anti-fascists had earlier gathered in Rostock and tried to start a march to Dierkow, but were immediately halted by police. The resulting confrontation ended with scuffles and the anti-fascists completely encircled by police.

Feelings were running high because, even before the day's events got properly under way, a bus load of fascists had attacked people waiting for the start of the anti-racist march in a small circus tent. A heavily pregnant woman was kicked in the stomach, fortunately without serious injury.

Eventually, the fascists were pushed back to their bus but a car load of nazis drove deliberately into the dispersing anti-fascists and badly injured one of them, fracturing his skull and causing other severe injuries.

A German anti-fascist perspective on the election results

It is too early to say what effect the election of a Red-Green government, a coalition of Social Democrats and Greens, will haveon the conservative and extreme right-wing camps, but three distinct scenarios appear possible. Developments in the mainstream conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and CSU will, as so often before, play a decisive role.

The first possibility is that the CDU/CSU changes its political profile by abandoning the hardline policies promoted by the former federal Interior Minister Manfred Kanther and the leadership challenger Wolfgang Schäuble, and attempts to move back towards the centre. Peter Müller, the CDU's leader in the Saarland, has already demanded stronger social alignment saying that "it is not enough for the Union to be identified only with economic competence".

Müller's policy means putting social justice, thrown overboard to appease the FDP during the Kohl years, back on the agenda. The leading business daily, *Das Handelsblatt*, has already warned against the consequences. If the CDU moves to the centre, it says, a vacuum would open up on the right that could be filled by the DVU, the NPD and the REP. These parties would then be able to present themselves as the "true representatives" of dissatisfied and homeless nationalist and racist voters and broaden their electoral base at the expense of the CDU/CSU.

The second scenario is that the CDU/CSU tilts further to the right. There is ample support for such a move in both parties, especially the CSU, and not only on issues such as asylum and immigration policies. Some top CDU politicians are demanding a much harder line in the economic and social arena and a complete break from what they think has been a longstanding consensus on social policy between the CDU and SPD.

This is the view expressed by the CDU's Economics Minister in Saxony, Kajo Schommer, who has demanded the sacking of Kohl and a purge of the party leadership. The influential exiles' organisations, hungry for support, would back such a line.

If the CDU/CSU does drift further to the right, it would be able to pick up and integrate part of the current support for the fascist REP. This could lead to social and political polarisation of the kind that occurred during the early years of the SPD/FDP coalition in the 1970s. Some militant nazis might then embark on a serious terrorist campaign aimed at creating an atmosphere of destabilisation and uncertainty, in which right-wing extremists could present themselves as "protectors of law and order".

The third alternative is that the CDU/CSU union breaks up, with the CSU walking out and trying to establish itself as a federal, as opposed to merely Bavarian, party. There has been some thinking and movement in this direction for more than two decades. Indeed, the REP was founded in the 1980s because the CSU failed to follow this path.

If the Union does collapse and the CSU go federal, it can be assumed that the CSU would scoop up the exiles' organisations and part of the REP and DVU and steer in a much more extreme direction.

Whatever happens, the fascist electoral parties could develop in a number of ways:

- The REP could split over cooperation with the DVU with one faction fusing with the DVU before next year's European elections.
- The DVU recruits split-offs from the REP and NPD, establishes itself as the strongest force on the extreme right and wins seats in the Berlin and Saxony parliaments.
- The NPD manages to win election to the Saxon parliament and starts to exert an influence over the so far immune DVU.

What is certain is that the election of the Red/Green coalition will not put an end to racist attacks, nazi organisation and increasing nationalism and revanchism. For anti-fascists, the tasks and key issues remain generally unchanged.

Abridged from an article in issue no 45 of *Antifaschistisches Info Blatt.*

Sweden elects more fascist councillors

The far-right anti-immigration populist Count Ian Wachtmeister and his New Party (DNP) failed to make any impact in September's general and local elections. His old party, New Democracy (NyD), is also politically dead.

Both parties registered negligible support, but anti-immigration populists in the south of the country were able to record substantial progress, as did the fascist Sweden Democrats, who increased their tally of local council seats from five to eight.

The Sweden Democrats (SD) conducted a surprisingly efficient campaign, staging more than 100 public meetings and events. In spite of all the internal mayhem that has plagued the organisation in the past four years, including a change of party leader, a major split resulting in the formation of the nazi Heimat Party and the defection of the entire SD branch in Ekerö near Stockholm, the party still managed to increase its national vote from 14,000 in 1994 to 19,600 this year, becoming the third largest political party outside parliament.

Although a vote of just below 20,000 is not even remotely close to posing a threat to political stability in Sweden, the SD result is still a cause for concern and a setback for democracy in the districts where the SD secured its new council seats and almost gained another three.

In the three districts where the SD won its five council seats in 1994, its vote this time was slightly lower. In Ekerö the SD lost its only seat after its branch, including the sitting councillor Freddy Fjällqvist, decamped to the Heimat Party two years ago. Nevertheless, the SD won 161 votes (1.3%), only 0.4% less than in 1994.

In tiny Dals-Ed, close to the Norwegian border, the SD won 2.7%, a fall of 1.3%, and lost one of its two seats. The vote was a disappointment for the party, which has been almost invisible locally since 1994. However, the result is not significant because of the district's small size: 2.7% is only 77 votes.

In Höör, in Sweden's southernmost region of Skåne, the SD got 397 votes (5.2%) and retained both the seats won in 1994, although with about 25 votes less than in 1994. The seats are held by Anders Wettergren and Björn Söder, both of whom have worked hard to present themselves as "decent, ordinary local politicians". The SD targeted a few selected areas and its strategy met some success.

In Haninge in the south of Stockholm, one of the areas targeted by the SD, the party gained almost 1,000 votes and won two new seats. They will be taken by deputy party leader Johan Rinderheim and Anders Steen. Rinderheim, an academic propagating so-called "radical conservatism", was the architect of the SD-Front National agreement reported in last month's *Searchlight*.

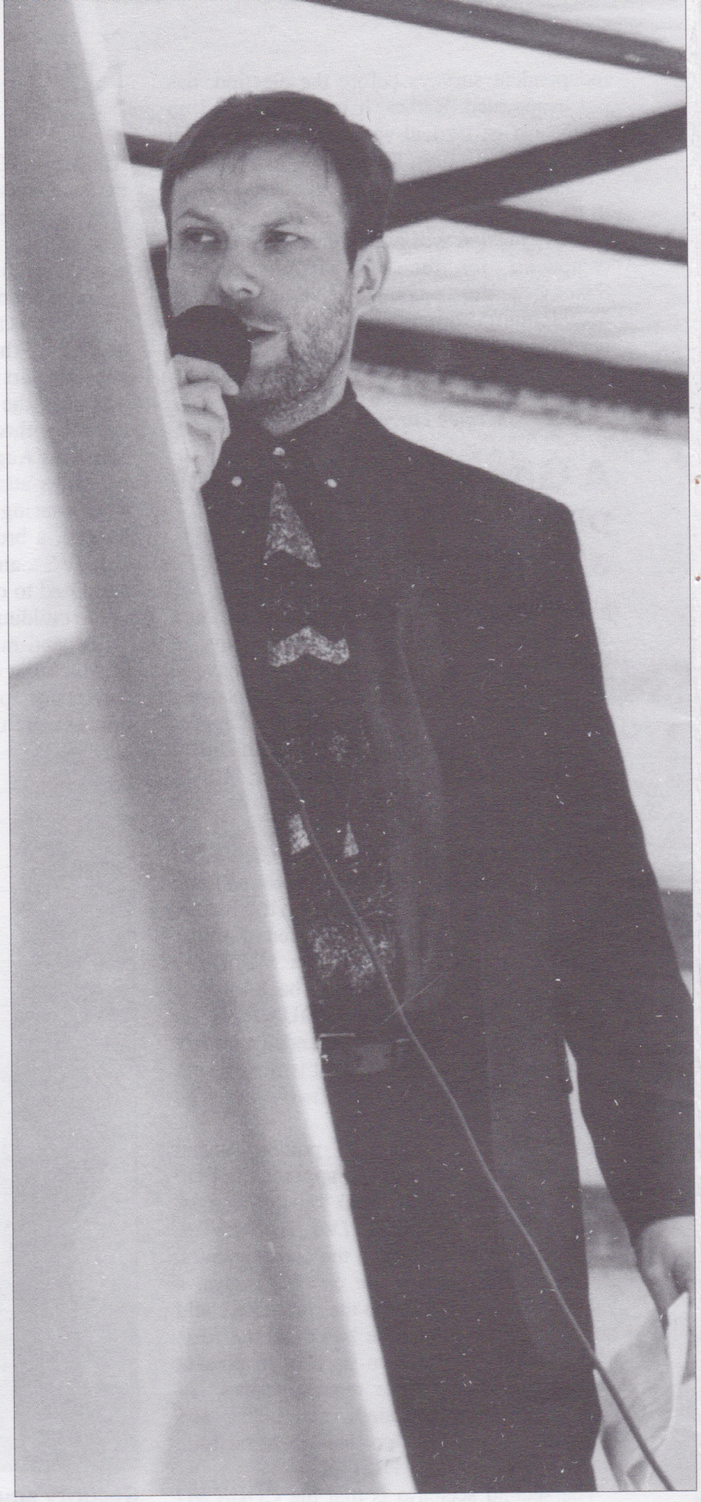
Michael Bergman and Steve Larsson took another two new seats for the SD in Trollhättan in central Sweden, where the party polled almost 1,000 votes. A local paper fulsomely profiled the SD candidates before the election and, although the articles were not uncritical, the SD was given the same treatment as mainstream parties and thus accorded a massive amount of undeserved credibility.

A final seat was won in the south Swedish coastal town of Sölvesborg, where the local candidate Jimmie Äkesson gained 176 votes (1.8%). Somewhat worryingly, the local party branch is almost exclusively comprised of teenagers too young to vote. It has focused its activities almost entirely on schools and youth centres.

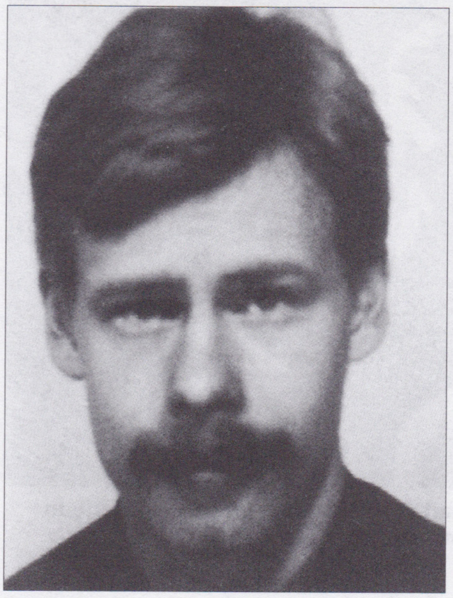
The SD came very close to grabbing another three seats. In Tierp, in northern Stockholm, the local SD candidate, Joakim Larsson, was elected for three days but lost his seat when last-minute postal votes were counted. Three of those votes went to a Conservative Party candidate, which was enough to put Larsson out of business. In other districts, the SD was only a few dozen votes short of victory.

The SD has emerged from the campaign greatly strengthened. For a long time the mass media ignored the party, except when its public appearances led to clashes with anti-fascists. Despite this, the SD's campaign ran fairly smoothly. With a few exceptions, notably in Stockholm, where a heavy anti-fascist street presence forced the SD to cancel scheduled rallies in the weeks leading up to the election, the party was able to implement much of its game plan.

As in previous campaigns the SD's strategy was to construct a façade of mainstream respectability. The difference this time was that party leader Mikael Jansson is not a veteran nazi lout, but a former member of the mainstream Centre Party. Though lacking in



The SD's membership in Euro-Nat, Le Pen's fascist international, has elevated the SD from an isolated Nordic sect with a few hundred psychotic members to a recognised and accepted part of an established international movement



Photos: Expo, Sweden

Top: Johan Rinderheim, the radical conservative deputy chairman of the SD and architect of the party's agreement with Le Pen. Above: Steve Larsson, one of the newly elected SD councillors in Trollhättan. Left: Mikael Jansson, chairman of the SD

charisma, Jansson has been able to keep the party in working order which, considering its fractious clientele, is an achievement.

The arrival of Jansson has also spelled a shift in the party's profile. The old guard of of veteran racists and loose cannons is slowly being replaced by a younger generation of activists not blemished by a skinhead past or former membership of nazi organisations.

Most of the newly elected councillors are clean-cut, well dressed young men with a good education and sometimes an academic background. There are still exceptions, such as Marcus Koch, best described as "the local hoodlum", in Dals-Ed, but they are increasingly rare.

Two more factors will bolster the SD's morale. The first is the now public "brotherhood status" with Jean-Marie Le Pen's FN in France. Le Pen's £40,000 investment in the SD's campaign was not wasted. He did not expect miracles and he, more than most European politicians, knows about humble beginnings. For almost 30 years Le Pen himself vegetated in organisations far smaller then the current SD until his breakthrough in the mid-1980s.

From the SD's point of view, however, money is not as important as political acceptance. The SD's membership in Euro-Nat, Le Pen's fascist international, has elevated the SD from an isolated Nordic sect with a few hundred psychotic members to a recognised and accepted part of an established international movement. The psychological boost, not to mention the potential new members it will attract, should not be underestimated.

The second factor is that the 1998 elections have finally wiped out annoying competition which, throughout the 1990s, was able to scoop up votes otherwise probably destined for the SD.

The populist NyD, which gained 6.7% of the national vote and 20 seats in parliament in 1991, the year it was founded, was erased from the political map. Now led by Per-Anders Gustavsson, 24, the NyD won only 8,300 votes and holds one local council seat.

The DNP represented more serious competition to the SD. The millionaire Count Wachtmeister tried to play the anti-immigration card in his bid to return to parliament. His problem was that nobody was listening and the only people who regularly turned up at his meetings were anti-fascist activists.

In spite of pouring what has been estimated at £500,000 to £1 million into his election campaign, he scored 25,000 votes, only slightly better than the SD. This disaster must surely mark the end of his career.

The only other non-parliamentary right-wing party that made a slight impact nationally was the Pensioner's Interest Party (SPI). The SPI has a broad political programme based on looking after the political and economic interests of senior citizens. In recent years the party has become increasingly populist and has promoted an anti-immigration agenda, which has brought it close to the extreme right.

The SPI won more than 50,000 votes and perhaps as many as 50 council seats, some of which might otherwise have gone to the SD. However, the SPI, regardless of its ambitions, does not constitute a serious challenge to the SD.

The SD is now the only extreme-right party with an intact national organisation. Regionally, however, anti-immigration populists based in Skåne scored good results. A few years ago the racist Sjöbo Party won 16 seats, became the largest party in the Sjöbo constituency and was the subject of international media attention. This time the party lost eight seats to the SPI and the Conservative Party in Sjöbo itself, but won four seats in nearby Kristianstad.

The Sjöbo Party is the main force of a southern electoral bloc called The Wellbeing of Skåne (SV), made up of 16 populist parties. The SV holds close to 50 seats in Skåne with a political platform that is indistinguishable from that of the SD. Populist and protest politics won serious acceptance in the local elections. If one includes the SPI and a number of parties outside the SV alliance, populist parties took up to 100 council seats in Skåne alone.

From our Swedish correspondent

NORWAY

Nazi arsonists face weapons charges

The Norwegian police have brought a battery of serious charges against four hard-core nazi activists, resulting from an arson attack on local offices of the anti-racist organisation, SOS Rasisme, in Asker.

Carl Joachim Winge, 29, Johnny Olsen (not to be confused with the nazi killer of same name), 28, Andreas Brandvoll, 19, and Anne-Lene Larsen, 20, are accused of taking part in a raid on the building, which was daubed with nazi slogans and set ablaze. During the break-in, the hard disk of SOS Rasisme's computer was stolen, together with some money and 50 bottles of lemonade.

The nazis have not been charged with arson but with criminal damage, a lesser offence. Other charges include possession of illegal firearms, possession of offensive weapons, burglary and car theft.

Olsen, a leader of the local branch of the nazi group Viking in Gran, a small town north of Oslo, has also been charged with incitement to racial hatred after publicly harassing a black person, a number of assaults, disturbing public order by bawling "Sieg Heil" while he was drunk, possessing a flick-knife and theft.

Olsen first came to the attention of the Norwegian anti-fascist magazine *Monitor* when he, together with members of the Combat 18 linked "Reichsfront", hurled fireworks, stones and pool balls at a trade union May Day demonstration. A year later he was arrested for rioting when Swedish nazis marched through the village of Nora.

Brandvoll has been charged with car theft, driving without a licence, resisting arrest, speeding and possession of a knuckleduster with an attached knife-blade. This is not his first brush with the law. On 31 January he was arrested on the Swedish border for driving without a licence. When the police searched the car they found a pair of lead gloves belonging to him. He was fined £180.

Winge, a paranoid nazi, has been charged with obtaining and possessing stolen army weapons. Among other things the police confiscated an AG3 automatic carbine, an AK47 rifle and a magazine-clip with 20 live rounds for an Uzi machine gun from his wardrobe. Some of the weapons had been obtained from the convicted nazi thug and gun runner Tommy Tangen, from Hønefoss. Winge is also accused of receiving stolen computer equipment.

Larsen has been charged with car theft, driving without a licence, reckless driving and fleeing from the police.

Hopefully, if convicted, the four will spend some time in one of Norway's nastier prisons.

- A big sorry to Jenny Warburg for using her photograph of Bo Gritz last month without crediting her for it.
- Two freelance journalists in Stockholm and not, as we wrongly stated last month, our Swedish sister journal *Expo* were responsible for exposing the involvement of the Taiwan firm Ritek in the manufacture of nazi hate music CDs in 1996.

Austrian fascists keep antisemitic cult alive

Some of the antisemitic right-wing Austrian students who gather regularly in the centre of Vienna on a mid-week lunchtime

Earlier this year crowds of believers in an antisemitic religious cult made a pilgrimage to the town of Rinn commemorate the supposed "martyrdom" of one Anderl von Rinn.

This bizarre cult began in 1642 with a story fabricated by Ipollito Guaroni, a physician from Halle. Influenced by the medieval legend of Simon of Trent, she claimed, without a shred of evidence, that Anderl von Rinn, a Tyrolean boy, had been martyred at the hands of Jews more than 160 years earlier.

As with Simon of Trent, the Vatican immediately recognised von Rinn as a martyr but did not formally declare him a saint. Three centuries later von Rinn's story was so doubtful that in 1953 the Bishop of Innsbruck removed the anniversary of his death from the church calendar. In 1985 the remains of Anderl were removed from under the altar of Rinn parish church and an antisemitic fresco there was painted over.

The official annual pilgrimage to Rinn ended in 1994 when a senior Austrian Catholic bishop banned the cult. However, followers continue to mark the anniversary. They include a number of prominent fascists.

A retired chaplain, Gottfried Melzer, acts as the mouthpiece for these fascist elements with his scruffy newsletter, the *Anderl-Bote*. In its latest edition, alongside gushing reports about the miraculous qualities of the Anderl cult, is a chronology of events surrounding statements by Robert Prantner last December in the fascist weekly *Zur Zeit*.

In *Zur Zeit*, which is published by Andreas Mölzer, an adviser to the leader of the Freedom Movement (FPÖ) Jörg Haider, Prantner, a recently honoured theologian, expressed support for the von Rinn ritual murder myth. This earned him the condemnation of the Austrian Press Council after complaints from the Vienna-based Documentation Centre of the Austrian Resistance (DÖW). However, the State Prosecutor's Office decided not to proceed with incitement charges brought by the DÖW.

In his article Melzer approves of the parliamentary questions put on behalf of "Professor Prantner" by the FPÖ official Ewald Stadler and other FPÖ MPs, who described the rejection of Prantner's antisemitic university dissertation as an attack on academic freedom. He then writes about the "passionate protests" which followed Prantner's *Zur Zeit* article. He vents his rage on the DÖW and the Austrian Jewish community, labelling them as "ringleaders of the campaign against Prantner". Not only are they alleged to have planned protest demonstrations and disruption of an award ceremony for Prantner, but they are also accused of mobilising "Dutch foreign correspondents" against him.

The Jewish community is even accused of intervention in the Vatican Secretariat. As a result of such pressure, claims Melzer's article, the Chancellor of the Order of Maltese Knights considered the expulsion of Prantner from its diplomatic service.

This decision was, however, later reduced to a ban on making statements on the "Jewish Question". Prantner, who in March this year claimed diplomatic immunity as an envoy of the Maltese Knights, when being investigated by police, asked the Order for "time to reflect".

Melzer reveals other interesting facts about this well known "theologian", for example, that Prantner featured as a key speaker at a meeting of the fascist so-called Peoples' Movement for Moral and Social Renewal (VBSSE) in January this year.

The VBSSE is so right-wing that it was banned until 1982, when it was legalised following a decision by the Constitutional Court. Maximilian Baumgartner, chief of the VBSSE, has declared his organisation's main aim to be the rescue of "our people, our children and our Western Christian culture from moral collapse and cultural dilution by ungodly and racially destructive forces".

In one of its leaflets the VBSSE claims that it will "unmask the racially destructive effects of the Freemasons, highlight the evil consequences of interest slavery" and win "the workers for a true people's society".

Elsewhere, Baumgartner has written that "the Zionists and their allies are responsible for an anti-German propaganda wave, using atrocity lies of the most despicable kind". His "identification of the world enemy" is summed up in his assertion that "international, racially alien money power rules untrammelled".

Not surprisingly, Baumgartner also crops up in the *Anderl-Bote*. Melzer thanks Baumgartner for providing "important material" for the chronology about Prantner and lets slip that Baumgartner underwent "lengthy interrogation by the police" in connection with the letter-bomb attacks that plagued Austria from the end of 1993.

Finally, Prantner also gets yet another mention … as "a leader" of the Anderl commemoration in Rinn, no less.

From our Austrian correspondent

CANADA

Hammerskins hammered

Eight neo-nazi boneheads are facing a record 240 criminal charges following their arrests on 18 September. The nazis were the principals in a series of violent attacks perpetrated against young progressives and anti-fascists in downtown Montreal between March and July. Their arrests are a severe blow to the Hammerskins in Montreal and Quebec.

The Hammerskins' commando of 10 to 15 hit patrons in bars that young anti-fascists were known to frequent. The attacks followed a set plan; singling out their victims, spraying them with mace, hitting them with crowbars and baseball bats and leaving the scene in a hurry. The four main attacks left at least 30 people wounded, some seriously.

The actions of this "terror squad" came to an end after some of the victims came forward and laid charges. Police moved in on the gang during the night of 18 September and seized a wide variety of weapons and ammunition, silencers, as well as nazi flags and literature. They also found more than 2kg of marijuana during their search of the flats of these "no to drugs" advocates.

Among those arrested and charged with aggravated assault are Steve Lavalle, 23, and Sylvain Quirion, 25. These two were convicted in 1995 on charges including uttering death threats, breaking and entering and possession of illegal weapons, while part of a five-man team of boneheads in Montreal.

The eight nazis needed police protection when more than 60 young anti-fascists demonstrated in front of the court in Montreal on 9 October in response to a call by the local branches of Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice (SHARP) and Anti Racist Action. The anti-riot squad provided escorts and protection for the boneheads as they left the court and entered the subway station. More victims are expected to come forward and further arrests may follow in connection with the same incidents and weapons seizures.

From our Canadian correspondent

REFLEX REPORTS FRANCE

Reflex is the French equivalent of Searchlight. It publishes a magazine and carries out excellent research and analysis of the far right in France. Reflex is pleased to extend the benefit of its expertise to Searchlight's readers by contributing a monthly resumé of events in France.

Toulon voters reject FN nepotism

MARSEILLE
DRAGUIGNAN
BESANÇON
LYON
TOULON
VITROLLES
KRUTENAU
Cité Administrative
Bateliers
Austerlitz

International trade unionists in Strasbourg protest against the FN

The battle to succeed Jean-Marie Le Pen as leader of the fascist Front National (FN) continues to rage. The leading contender is still Le Pen's deputy, Bruno Mégret, even if Le Pen is far from willing to hand over control to him.

Having pushed aside and marginalised his opponents at the heart of the FN's organisational apparatus, Mégret has now tried to force Le Pen to retire and to place himself at the head of the FN's candidates' list in next June's European elections. Le Pen is still uncertain whether he will be able to lead the party in the ballot because he is still awaiting a verdict in his appeal against the two-year suspension of his civil rights.

Le Pen's long-term political future has been further jeopardised by the withdrawal of his European parliamentary immunity on 6 October to allow him to be charged in Germany with minimising the Holocaust.

However, Le Pen is not an easy man to shift and should he be barred from the European election, he has made it clear that his wife, Jany, who seems to prefer her role as a housewife, will head the FN's list.

Nepotism has become fashionable in the FN since Catherine Mégret and Cendrine Le Chevallier were adopted to fight elections, in Vitrolles and Toulon respectively, after the disqualification of their husbands. Needless to say, Mégret opposes Le Pen's stance and has called for a vote on the issue.

Le Pen is already thinking well beyond the European elections to the next French presidential elections in 2002. He is so anxious to stem Mégret's influence that he has already announced his candidature. The move follows his public criticism of Mégret at the FN's "university" at the end of August and the release of a statement by the party's Political Bureau expressing renewed "confidence" in Le Pen.

Although Madame Le Pen is totally unknown, she got 13% of the votes in a public opinion poll in mid-September, compared to Mégret's 14% and Le Pen's 15%. At the annual FN Blue-White-Red festival at the end of September, Le Pen reiterated his intention to field his wife as a candidate in front of tens of thousands of members and supporters.

In the same speech, he made a grudging concession to the Mégret faction by extolling "the rules of national discipline" in the FN's relations with the rest of the right. This was necessary, he said, to "drive out of power the Socialists and Communists who are socialising and communising the country a bit more every day". Interpreted, this means voting for right-wing candidates in the second round of elections where FN candidates have been eliminated in the first round.

At the same time, Le Pen loudly inveighed against what he called "the bogus right which has no ideals, no ideas, no faith and no rules". He ruled out any attempt by the FN to "reconstitute the parliamentary right" which he denounced as "coming to the assistance of the RPR and UDF", France's mainstream conservative and liberal parties. Thus, Le Pen's speech managed to combine two quite opposite strategies without managing to shock or alienate his followers.

Le Pen's counter-offensive against Mégret was stepped up at the beginning of October, when the FN leader presented his "team" for the run-up to the European elections. Mégret was notably absent. The eight Political Bureau members charged with crisscrossing the country to lead the FN protest against the ratification of the European Union Treaty of Amsterdam and the disappearance of the French franc in favour of the euro do not include Mégret or any of his supporters. The director of the FN's campaign is Jean-Claude Martinez, an ally of Le Pen and a bitter enemy and rival of Mégret.

The various elections at the end of September produced mixed results. The good news was the defeat, albeit quite narrow, of Cendrine Le Chevallier in a parliamentary by-election in Toulon. Her 700-vote defeat denies the FN any voice in parliament.

This was the third poll in 18 months. In May 1997 Jean Marie Le Chevallier was elected with 53% of the vote, but his victory was quashed after spending irregularities were found. On 3 May this year his wife was beaten by a mere 33 votes only to lose again in September with 48.5% of the vote.

Voting support for the FN fell markedly with many erstwhile right-wing voters either abstaining or voting Socialist. The Toulon result and the sudden eruption of tactical voting there are not easy to interpret. It appears that many citizens of Toulon are simply fed up with the FN and the detestable image it has bestowed on the city both in France and abroad.

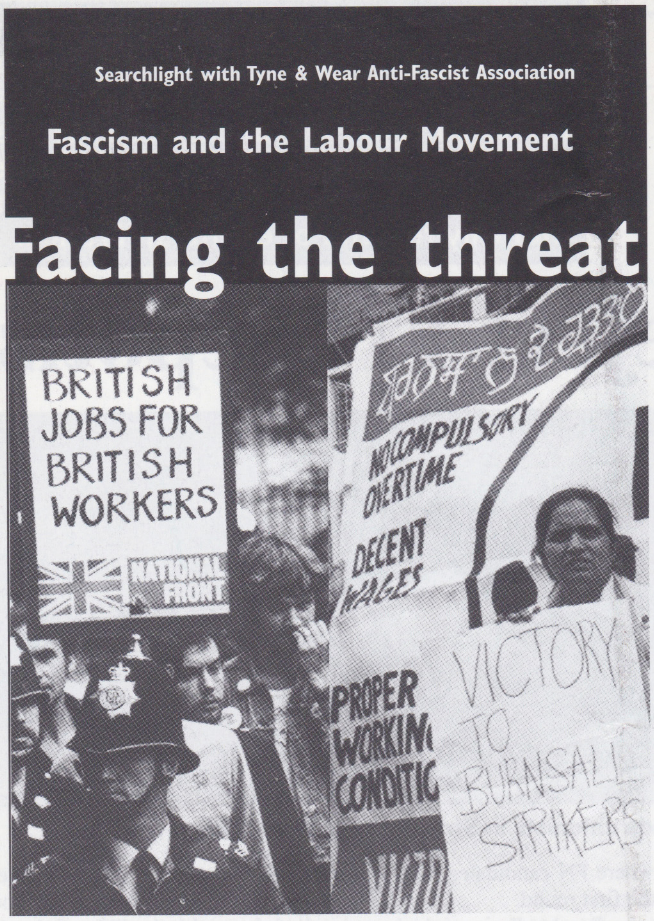
The results of two other elections were more worrying. In Aubagne the Communist candidate held on to his seat by a mere 30 votes after the right-wing candidate of Alain Madelin's Liberal Democracy doubled his vote in the second round of voting. Liberal Democracy is the mainstream right-wing party closest to the FN and probably all the FN's 22% first round vote was transferred to Liberal Democracy in the second. The Communist majority is so small that the election may have to be rerun.

In Dunkirk the Liberal Democracy candidate also benefited from a cosy relationship with the FN, which took 15% in the first round. The FN votes again went to Liberal Democracy in the second, causing the Socialist to lose his seat. These successes will probably give Madelin, a former nazi, more justification for his goodwill towards the extreme right.

Finally, the FN managed broaden its base of support in the elections to the French upper house, the Senate, although it did not win any seats. The Senate is not elected by universal suffrage but by electors – *notables* – who hold positions of public responsibility, mayors, local and regional councillors, etc.

In the Bouches du Rhone the FN gained the backing of more *notables* than expected, 184 in all, and its candidate missed election by only 20 votes. In the Alpes-Maritimes it was the same story, with the FN polling 275 votes as against an anticipated 48.

The FN fared better than in 1989 in nine regions. Some analysts think these improved votes came mainly from "independent" electors outside the right-wing parties that reject an alliance with the FN.



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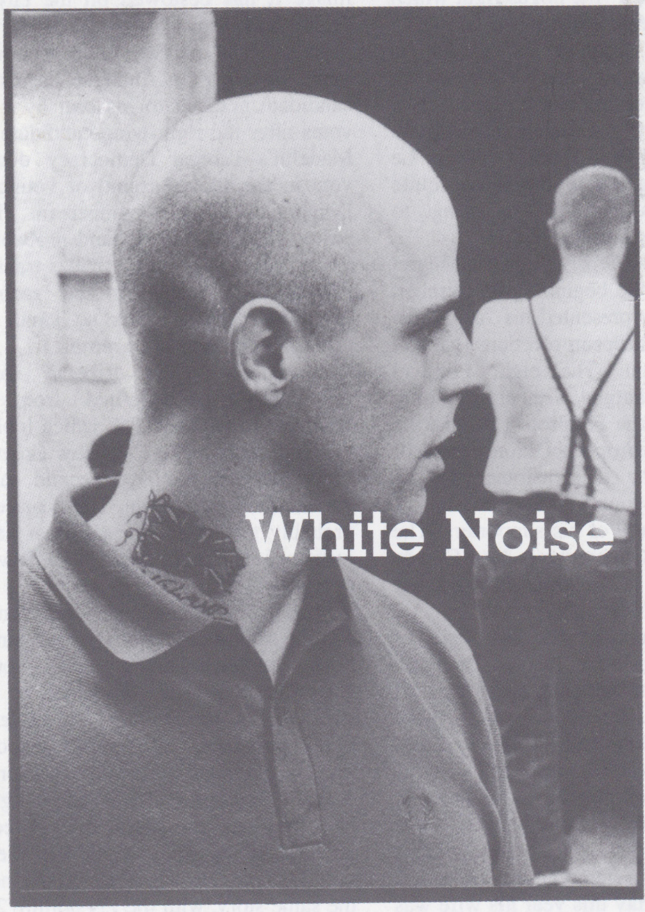

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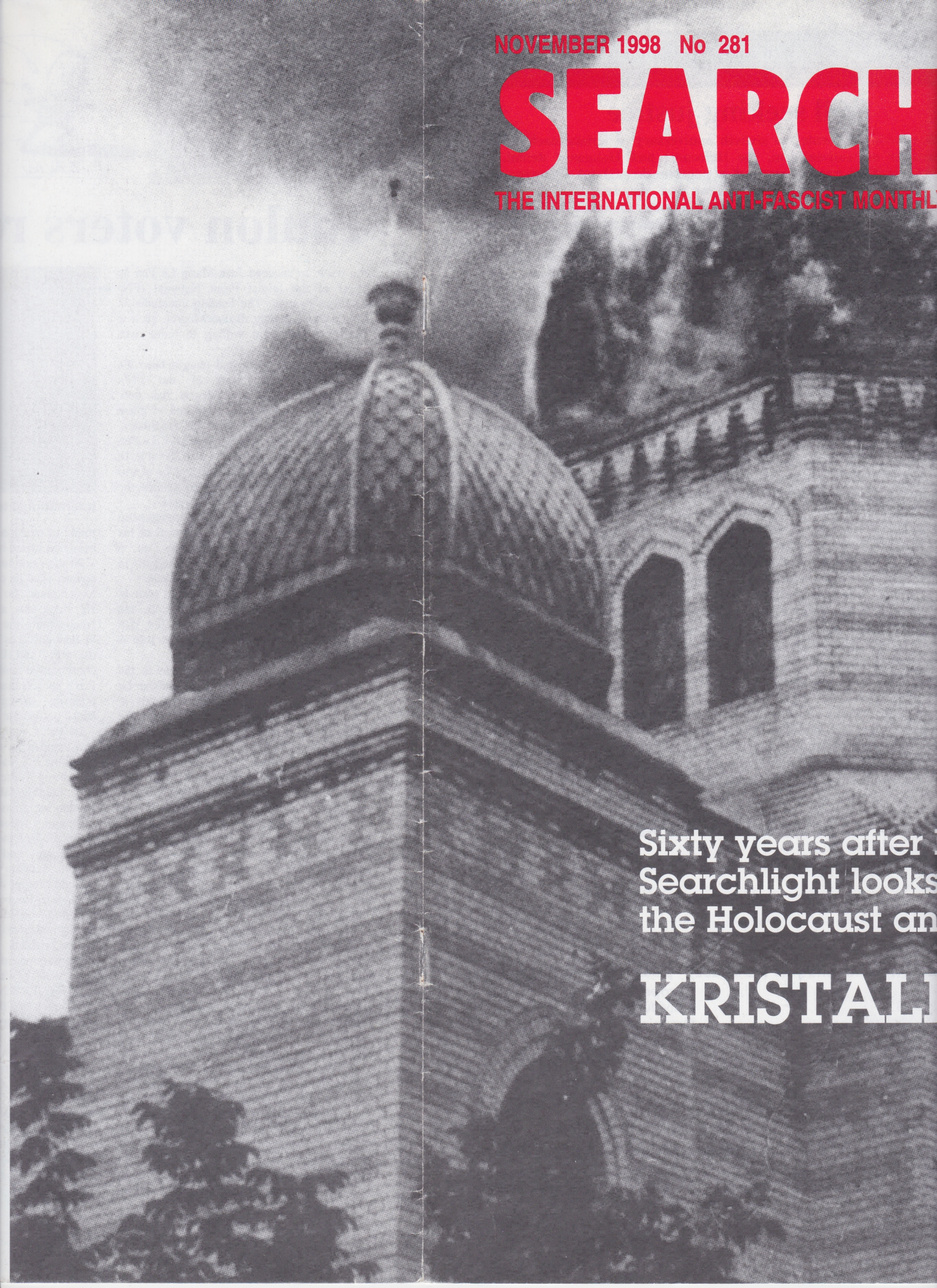

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